00031131

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
Town Hall, Bombay.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 18 July, 2018

Charles Talbot,

Duke of Shrewsbury.

Drawn and Engraved by W. Bond, from an Original Portrait painted by Sir Peter Lely, preserved at the Charter House.

Published Jun.ª 1822 by Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, & Brown, London.

PRIVATE AND ORIGINAL

CORRESPONDENCE

OF

CHARLES TALBOT, DUKE OF SHREWSBURY,

WITH

KING WILLIAM,

THE LEADERS OF THE WHIG PARTY,

AND OTHER DISTINGUISHED STATESMEN;

ILLUSTRATED WITH NARRATIVES

HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL:

FROM THE FAMILY PAPERS

IN THE POSSESSION OF HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF BUCCLEUCH,

NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

BY WILLIAM COXE, F.R.S. F.S.A.

ARCHDEACON OF WILTS, &c.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1821.

T.T. e5

B. 2463:

31131

00031131

Printed by T. C. Hansard, Peterborough-court, Fleet-street, London.

TO

HER GRACE

ELIZABETH,

DUCHESS OF BUCCLEUCH, &c.,

AS A TESTIMONY OF RESPECT,

AND

A PROOF OF GRATITUDE,

FOR THE LIBERAL AND UNRESERVED COMMUNICATION

OF THE HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

DERIVED FROM HER GRACE'S RELATIVE,

CHARLES TALBOT,

DUKE OF SHREWSBURY,

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED,

BY

HER OBLIGED AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

WILLIAM COXE.

PREFACE.

ALTHOUGH many publications have issued from the press, to elucidate the later period of our Annals, every reader, acquainted with English History, must be sensible of the obscurity which involves many parts of a reign, so interesting to posterity, as that of king William the Third: a period, when the struggle of a recent Revolution excited the most violent contests of party; when a new system of government and policy was introduced and developed; and when the minds of men were agitated with fearful recollections of the past, anxiety for the present, and alarm for the future.

Much light has doubtless been thrown on this period, by The Correspondence and Diary of Henry, second earl of Clarendon; The Memoirs of Reresby, and Welwood; The Conduct of Sarah, duchess of Marlborough; The collections of Carstares, Lockhart, Cole, and the earl of Hardwicke; The Historical Memoirs of Dalrymple; and even by the garbled documents of Macpherson; but these publications have only partially removed the veil, and the knowledge which they have afforded, has served to excite additional curiosity.

No apology, therefore, can be deemed necessary, for presenting to the reader the Correspondence of the Duke of Shrewsbury, who was a principal actor in the Revolution, who possessed the full confidence of king William, and held the office of Secretary of State during the greater part of his reign. The value of these papers will be more highly estimated, when it is considered, that they are not mere official documents, but private correspondence, never intended for the public eye.

The Collection is divided into three Parts:

The First Part contains the Correspondence with king William. It comprises the earliest period of the duke of Shrewsbury's official career, from his appointment as Secretary, at the Revolution, to his resignation, in 1690; the ineffectual negotiations, in 1693, to induce him to resume the seals; and, finally, his epistolary communications with the sovereign, from his second appointment, in April, 1694, to his departure for the continent, in 1700.

Little needs be said, to prove the value and interest of this Correspondence, which not only developes many important transactions of state, but exhibits, in the clearest light, the characters both of the sovereign and the minister. The letters of the king are distinguished by good sense and firmness, as well as by a tone of simplicity and condescension, seldom found in the correspondence of a sovereign; those of the secretary, are marked by a respectful frankness, and spirit of independence, which as seldom occur in that of a courtier. With these are blended a few letters, which passed between the duke of Shrewsbury and the earl of Portland, because they may be considered equally as confidential though indirect communications with the king,

and, in general, explain subjects, alluded to in the royal correspondence.

The Second Part contains: first, a selection from the Correspondence with admiral Russell, during his command in the Mediterranean, which is calculated to exhibit his character, and to display the difficulties, attending this memorable enterprise. A few documents are added, relative to his expedition to the coast of France, in 1696, when he frustrated the intended invasion of England. Secondly, the Correspondence with viscount Galway, during the two last campaigns of the war in Italy, in 1695 and 1696, describing the military transactions in that country, and unfolding the mysterious policy of the duke of Savoy, and the causes of his defection from the grand alliance. Thirdly, the Correspondence with the earls of Portland and Jersey, and sir Joseph Williamson, who were all employed in negotiating the peace of Ryswick.

The Third Part consists of the confidential Correspondence of the duke of Shrewsbury with Robert, earl of Sunderland, lords Somers and Wharton, admiral Russell, earl of Orford, and Mr. Montague, chancellor of the exchequer, who was raised to the peerage, by the title of lord Halifax. It embraces the period from 1695 to 1704, and will serve to elucidate the Correspondence with the sovereign. It opens a view of the transactions in the cabinet, and proceedings in parliament, and displays the jealousies, which the king entertained against the whigs, as well as the feuds which prevailed among themselves. It also unfolds the conduct of lord Sunderland, exhibits his influence with the king, records the cabals, which occasioned his disgrace, and traces the cause which led to the removal of the whig administration.

This whole Correspondence is entirely original, and has never before been given to the public, except a few letters, which have been printed in other works, and which are here introduced, to render the series more complete.

With these various documents are interspersed political, historical, and biographical narratives, which are intended to exhibit the progress of events, as well as to display the views of parties, the proceedings in parliament, and the secret history of the cabinet. In composing such elucidations I have consulted and compared the writers of the times, and the most authentic of our national historians. I have, also, availed myself of a miscellaneous collection of papers, consisting of correspondence with spies, examinations, and other official documents in the Shrewsbury papers; but I have derived peculiar advantage from the letters of Mr. Vernon, who was first private secretary to the duke of Shrewsbury, and, from 1697 to the close of William's reign, secretary of state. His correspondence, which begins in September, 1696, and extends to November, 1708, is extremely minute and circumstantial, till the departure of the duke for the continent. It has furnished numerous indications of character, and historical facts, connected with the administration of his noble patron, which, by no other means could have been rescued from oblivion. The whole was found too voluminous for publication, but a few extracts and explanatory letters are occasionally introduced.*

I scarcely think it necessary to apologise to the reader, for

* The letters of Mr. Vernon to the duke of Shrewsbury form three quarto volumes, closely written, which, if printed, would scarcely be contained in a less compass. Unfortunately, those of the duke of Shrewsbury to him, are not preserved in the family papers.

having adopted an uniform style of orthography; for, if the language of the writers be scrupulously preserved, it cannot be gratifying to the eye, to toil through all the varieties of spelling, which custom and caprice have introduced. This alteration has been chiefly necessary in the letters of admiral Russell, who wrote more like a seaman than a scholar.

The letters from king William are all autographs, and written in the french tongue; but, for the sake of uniformity, they are translated with as close an adherence as possible to the originals. The same remark may be applied to those of lord Portland and lord Galway.

The rest of the Correspondence, with few exceptions, is autographic; and, in those few cases, where another hand is employed, the letters preserve the same confidential character, being dictated by the principals, when unable, from indisposition, or other causes, to use the pen.

The letters of the duke of Shrewsbury are, in general, the original draughts, in his own hand-writing, with many erasures and alterations: a few only appear in that of Mr. Vernon, his secretary, but corrected by himself.

These papers first attracted my attention while I was composing the Memoirs of John, duke of Marlborough. At that period I was favoured with the inspection of several transcripts, made by the late Edward Lyte, esq., treasurer to his present majesty, when prince of Wales, through the kindness of his daughter, Mrs. Fisher, of Tidwell House, near Exmouth. The perusal not only furnished much valuable information for that

work, but induced me to apply to the Duchess of Buccleuch, as possessor of the originals, for leave to examine the whole series. Her Grace readily acceded to my request, communicated many other documents, connected with the public life of her noble relative,* and, finally, permitted me to offer this selection, in the present form, to the public.

I have also to record my obligations to lord Montagu, for his kind acquiescence in the indulgence granted me by his noble mother, and for his communication of the manuscript Journal, kept by the duke of Shrewsbury, during his continuance abroad. This diary, though confined to the incidents of his private life, and travels, at a time when he ceased to be of public consequence, yet furnishes some curious notices of his character and feelings, and affords the most conclusive proofs of his attachment to the government established at the Revolution, and his sincere devotion to the doctrines of the Protestant Church, which he had deliberately embraced.

The portrait of the duke of Shrewsbury was engraven from an original picture, by sir Peter Lely, preserved at the Charter House; and, for permission to take a copy, I am indebted to the kindness of the reverend Dr. Fisher, the present master.

I need not appeal to the indulgence of candid readers for trifling inaccuracies, which may occur in these pages, when they are apprised, that, during the progress of the work, I laboured under a gradual decay of sight, which considerably impeded my researches, and precluded me from correcting the press. I have,

* See page 665.

therefore, still greater reason than before, to repeat my grateful acknowledgments to my former secretary, Mr. Hatcher, Postmaster of Salisbury, for his aid in the accomplishment of this undertaking.

In closing these prefatory remarks, it is proper to observe, that the work naturally terminates with the departure of the duke of Shrewsbury from England, in 1700. My materials have, however, enabled me to add a brief view of his conduct during his stay abroad; and I have also adverted to the political transactions, in which he was subsequently engaged, as well to render the Volume more complete, as to connect it more intimately with the History of the times.

Bemerton,
Nov. 1, 1821.

CONTENTS.

PART I.

Correspondence with the king.

CHAPTER I.—1689...1692.—Biographical anecdotes of Charles Talbot, duke of Shrewsbury—He renounces the roman catholic religion—Takes an active part in the revolution—Acquires the confidence of king William—Appointed secretary of state—Difficulties of his situation—Regrets the alienation of the king from the whigs—Commencement of his correspondence with the king—Solicits permission to resign—Remonstrates against the system of domestic policy, and the proposed dissolution of parliament—Resigns the seals, and heads the opposition in the house of lords—The king disgusted with the tories ..... *page* 3.

CHAPTER II.—1693...1694.—Resolution of William to effect a new change in the administration, and reconcile himself with the whigs—Importunes the earl of Shrewsbury to become secretary of state—Remarks and correspondence on the subject—Changes in the administration in favour of the whigs—Shrewsbury accepts the seals—Rewarded with a dukedom and the garter—Commencement of his administration ..... *page* 18.

CHAPTER III.—1694.—Transactions in 1694—Causes of the failure of the attempt on Brest—Naval expedition under admiral Russell to the Mediterranean—Military movements and intelligence—Correspondence during the absence of the king abroad, from May to July ..... *page* 31.

CHAPTER IV.—1694.—Irish affairs—Domestic transactions—Restoration of the East India company—Arrangements for the continuance of the fleet in the Mediterranean—Correspondence from July to January ..... *page* 55.

CHAPTER V.—1695.—Effects of the death of queen Mary—Disposition of the parliament—Naval and military operations—Expedition of admiral Russell to the Mediterranean—Recall of the fleet, in consequence of the threatened invasion—Farther considerations on Irish affairs—Administration of the lord deputy Capel—Correspondence from June to October, 1695 ..... *page* 80.

CHAPTER VI.—1696.—Character of the new parliament—Arrangements for the re-coinage of the silver—Depreciated state of public credit—Different expedients to raise supplies—Failure of the attempt to establish a land bank—Embarrassments of the king, from the want of means to carry on the war—Defection of the duke of Savoy—Division in the grand alliance—Necessity of peace—Correspondence from May to September, 1696 ..... *page* 109.

CHAPTER VII.—1696...1697.—Attempts of the french to invade England, and plot of the Jacobites to assassinate the king—Seizure of sir John Fenwick—His accusation against the duke of Shrewsbury and others—Magnanimity of king William—Shrewsbury injured by a fall from his horse—Decision of parliament in his favour—Bill of attainder against Fenwick—Kindness of the king—Shrewsbury repeatedly solicits leave to resign—Correspondence from Sept. 1696, to April, 1697 ... *page* 143.

CHAPTER VIII.—1697...1700.—Measures adopted for the restoration of public credit—Continued distresses of the country—Successes of France in the Netherlands, Catalonia, and South America—Negotiation for peace—Accusation of Price, Chaloner, and others, against the duke of Shrewsbury, for endeavouring to favour the escape of sir John Fenwick—Exposure of their plot—The king again refuses to accept his resignation—Permits him to quit the post of secretary of state—Prevails on him to accept the staff of lord chamberlain—His final resignation, and departure for the continent—Correspondence from July, 1697, to July, 1700 ..... *page* 166.

PART II.

No. 1.—*Correspondence with admiral Russell, in* 1695, 1696, *and* 1697.

No. 2.—*Correspondence with the earl of Galway, in* 1695 *and* 1696.

No. 3.—*Correspondence on the negotiations for the peace of Ryswick, in* 1696 *and* 1697.

CHAPTER I.—1694.—Naval operations—Intended attack on Brest—Motives which induced the king to dispatch a fleet into the Mediterranean—Junction of the Toulon and Brest squadrons—Departure of admiral Russell—His proceedings in the Mediterranean—Compels the french to retire to Toulon, and saves Barcelona—His disputes with the spaniards, and jealousy of the dutch—Directed to winter in the Mediterranean—His objections and oppositions combated by the duke of Shrewsbury—Complains of the king's parsimony and inattention to his services—Correspondence from May, 1694, to January, 1695 ..... *page* 189.

CHAPTER II.—1695.—Proceedings of the fleet in the Mediterranean—Transport of a reinforcement of troops, from Finale to Catalonia—Russell approaches the french coast, but is driven off by a storm—Offends the king by his fretful complaints—Mili-

tary operations in conjunction with the spaniards in Catalonia—Destitute condition of the spanish army—Second expedition to the coast of Provence—Disappointed in his purpose of attacking Toulon—Resumes his station at Cadiz—Considerations on the state of the fleet, and its disposition after his departure—Returns to England—Succeeded in the command by sir George Rooke—Correspondence from February to September, 1695 ..... *page* 221.

CHAPTER III.—1695...1696.—Return of admiral Russell from the Mediterranean—Entrusted with the command of the fleet prepared to repel the projected invasion from France—Blockades the french harbours in the channel—Unable to destroy their armaments—The enemy relinquish the projected invasion—Return of the admiral from his command—Correspondence in February and March, 1696 ..... *page* 246.

Correspondence with lord Galway.

CHAPTER IV.—1694.—Origin and progress of the House of Savoy—Situation and views of Victor Amadeus—His accession to the grand alliance, and subsidiary treaties with the maritime powers—Operations of the war, from 1690 to 1694—Mission and death of the duke of Schomberg—Lord Galway appointed embassador and commander of the auxiliary forces in Italy—Siege and capture of Casale—Ambiguous conduct of the duke of Savoy—Correspondence during the campaign of 1695..... *page* 255.

CHAPTER V.—1695...1696.—Recall of the british fleet from the Mediterranean—Developement of the private machinations of the duke of Savoy—His secret intelligence with France, and pilgrimage to Loretto—Projects for the ensuing campaign, and artifices employed by the duke to deceive the allies—Correspondence from February to April, 1696 ..... *page* 278.

CHAPTER VI.—1696.—Campaign of 1696—Advance of the french into Piedmont—Movements of the allies—Continuation of the delusive conduct of the duke of Savoy—His negotiation with marshal Catinat, the french commander—Accepts the offers of France—Concludes a treaty of neutrality—Joins the french army in invading the Milanese—Compels the allies to accede to the neutrality, and the Germans and auxiliaries to withdraw from Italy—Retreat of lord Galway—Correspondence from April to November, 1696 ..... *page* 288.

Negotiations and correspondence relative to the peace of Ryswick.

CHAPTER VII.—1696...1697.—Commencement of the negotiations for peace—Pretensions of the respective parties—Preliminary discussions and arrangements—The mediation of Sweden accepted—Appointment of plenipotentiaries—Assembly of the congress at Ryswick—Obstructions arising from the hesitation of the french to acknowledge king William, and to abandon the cause of James—Correspondence with lord Villiers and sir Joseph Williamson, from August, 1696, to July, 1697 ... *page* 316.

CHAPTER VIII.—1697.—Continuation of the negotiation, under the immediate superintendence of the king—Private conferences between the earl of Portland and marshal Boufflers—Arrangements relative to the acknowledgment of William's title; to the conduct to be pursued by France towards king James and his followers, and to the jointure of the exiled queen—Proceedings at Ryswick—Discussions on the german and spanish claims—Correspondence from June to August, 1697 ..... *page* 345.

CHAPTER IX.—1697...1698.—Progress and conclusion of the negotiations for the peace of Ryswick—Signature of the treaty by the maritime powers and Spain—The Germans abandoned by the other allies, and compelled to submit to the terms dictated by France—Correspondence from August to October, 1697—Observations on the first partition treaty, as connected with the peace of Ryswick—Dissatisfaction of the duke of Shrewsbury ..... *page* 365.

PART III.

Correspondence with the Whig Leaders, and lord Sunderland, from 1695 *to* 1700.

CHAPTER I.—1695.—Characters of lord Sunderland, Somers, Orford, and Wharton, and Charles Montague, afterwards lord Halifax—Correspondence on the proposed convocation of a new parliament..... *page* 385.

CHAPTER II.—1696.—Accusations of sir John Fenwick, against the duke of Shrewsbury and others—Preparations for his trial—Indisposition of the duke of Shrewsbury, and his retirement into the country—Proceedings on the bill of attainder in the House of Commons—Account of Smith, the informer, and his accusations—Correspondence on the subject, and on the transactions in parliament, from July to November, 1696 *page* 402.

CHAPTER III.—1696...1697.—Decision of the House of Lords on the bill of attainder—Disclosure of the insidious practices of lord Monmouth with Fenwick and Smith—Farther proceedings in parliament on this subject, and disgrace and imprisonment of Monmouth—Correspondence in December, 1696, and January, 1697. *page* 433.

CHAPTER IV.—1697.—New plot of lord Monmouth—Account of his connection with Brown, the highwayman and informer—Ministerial changes, and arrangements in favour of the whigs—Somers appointed chancellor, and Montague first lord of the Treasury—The whigs attempt to secure the promotion of lord Wharton to the office of secretary of state—Opposition of the king—Conduct of Sunderland, and embarrassments of the duke of Shrewsbury—Machinations of Price, Chaloner, and other informers—Correspondence from January to September, 1697 ..... *page* 469.

CHAPTER V.—1697.—Irksome situation of the duke of Shrewsbury, in consequence of the malicious insinuations of Price and others—Offers to resign—His resolution

strongly combated by his friends—New attempts of the whigs to obtain the seals for lord Wharton—Preparations for assembling the parliament—Shrewsbury persuaded to retain the seals—Sudden resignation of sir William Trumbull, and appointment of Mr. Vernon, as secretary of state—Resignation of lord Sunderland—Correspondence, from September to December, 1697 ..... *page* 489.

CHAPTER VI.—1698—Parliamentary proceedings on the military establishment—The ministry unable to prevent the reduction of the army to 10,000 men—Dissatisfaction between the king and the whigs—Attempts to effect an accommodation, by the promotion of Wharton as secretary, the appointment of Shrewsbury as chamberlain, and the admission of Sunderland into the privy council—Application of both parties for the mediation of Shrewsbury—Ineffectual meeting at Newmarket, between the king and the whig chiefs—The whigs refuse to coalesce with Sunderland—Endeavour to strengthen their cause preparatory to a new election—Project for a new East India company, carried through the House of Commons—Dissatisfaction of the king on his departure to Holland—Continuation of the correspondence from January to July, 1698. *page* 513.

CHAPTER VII.—1698.—Offer of the embassy to Spain, rejected by lord Wharton—Contest for the new elections—Declining influence of the whigs—Scheme of Mr. Montague to secure the auditorship of the exchequer, in reversion—Protracted stay of the king abroad—The whigs jealous of his majesty's returning partiality to the tories—Shrewsbury perseveres in his resolution to resign, in opposition to the joint efforts of the king and the whigs—Embarrassed situation of affairs in Ireland—Correspondence from July to October, 1698 ..... *page* 547.

CHAPTER VIII.—1698...1699.—Resignation of the duke of Shrewsbury, and his refusal to accept the staff of chamberlain—Meeting of the new parliament—Choice of a whig speaker—Continued misunderstanding between the king and the whigs—Discontent in the lower House, at the conduct of the king—Farther reduction of the forces—Dismission of the dutch guards—William forms the resolution of withdrawing from England—His interview with lord Somers—Dissuaded from his purpose—Fruitless efforts of the whigs to prevent the reduction of the army—Ineffectual appeal of the king, to avert the dismission of his dutch guards—Lord Orford attacked by the tories—Appointment of lord Jersey as secretary of state—Overture from the king to the whigs—Shrewsbury solicited to mediate, and accept a post in a new system of administration—Waits on the king at Newmarket and Windsor—Discontent and sudden resignation of lord Orford—Retirement of lord Portland, and favour of lord Albemarle—Intended retreat of Montague from the Treasury-board—Compromise effected by the mediation of Shrewsbury—Ministerial arrangements—Correspondence from December, 1698, to March, 1699. *page* 565.

CHAPTER IX.—1699.—Confidential communications between the duke of Shrewsbury and lord Sunderland—New and ineffectual attempt of Shrewsbury to mediate a reconciliation between that nobleman and the whigs—Accepts reluctantly the post of lord chamberlain—Decreasing influence of the whigs—Montague retires from the Treasury-board, and accepts the auditorship of the exchequer—Arrangement in consequence of this change—Correspondence from May to December, 1699 ..... *page* 586.

CHAPTER X.—1699...1700.—Proceedings in parliament on the affair of captain Kidd, and on the resumption of the Irish grants—New attempts to mediate a reconciliation between Sunderland and the whigs—Mediation of the duke of Shrewsbury solicited—Disappointment of the king and lord Sunderland—Dismission of lord Somers—Resentment of the whigs—Vacillation of the king—Various and contradictory overtures to the whigs—Proposal to lord Somers to return to office, rejected—Ineffectual attempts of the king to conciliate the whigs—Meeting of Shrewsbury with the chiefs of the party—Alarming state of the country—Shrewsbury extorts the royal permission to resign—Offends the whigs by his intimacy with Sunderland—Refuses various offices of state—Retires to the continent.... ..... *page* 599.

CHAPTER XI.—1700...1705—Brief account of the conduct of the duke of Shrewsbury, during his residence at Rome—He refuses to accept a post in the administration, after the accession of queen Anne—Falsely supposed to have been privately reconciled to the church of Rome—Justifies himself against the imputation—His correspondence with lord Godolphin, the duke of Marlborough, and the whig chiefs, from 1702 to 1705. *page* 632.

CHAPTER XII.—1705...1718—The duke of Shrewsbury departs from Rome—Arrives at Venice—Proceeds to Augsburgh—Marries the marchioness of Paleotti—Hopes of the ministry and the whigs to engage him in the administration—Correspondence on the subject—State of parties in England—His interview with the duke of Marlborough, at Frankfort—Declines all proposals to take a share in public affairs—Lands in England—Alienates his whig friends—Correspondence and intimacy with the duke of Marlborough—Joins Harley and the tories, in procuring the disgrace of the whig administration—Supports the protestant interest at the close of Anne's reign—His subsequent conduct, and death.....*page* 650.

ERRATA.

Page 6, *l.* last, *after* but *insert* as.—*p.* 72, *l.* 4 from bottom, *for* supply *read* safety.—*p.* 78, the letter from the duke of Shrewsbury; dated Jan. 22, 1695, is misplaced. It should have been introduced in *p.* 108, the date being 1695-6, instead of 1694-5.—*p.* 260, *l.* 22, *for* western *read* eastern.—*p.* 386, *l.* 25, 26, 27, I have erred in stating Sunderland to have been made president of the council, and prime minister, at the accession of James the second, whereas he was then merely continued in the office of secretary of state, to which he had been appointed by Charles, and did not become president of the council and chief minister till 1686.—*p.* 302, *for* 30 June or 10 July *read* 30 June and 10 July.—*p.* 472, note second, *for* probably lord Monmouth *read* probably lord Sunderland.—*p.* 613, *l.* 8, *for* June 13-23 *read* 13-24, and *l.* 19, *for* Jan. 25-Feb. 4, *read* Jan. 25-Feb. 5.—The reader will also find a few other letters in the seventeenth century misdated, the new style being advanced *eleven* instead of *ten* days before the old.—*p.* 630, *l.* 7, *for* induced *read* inclined.

Works by the Author of these Memoirs:

Sold by LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, & BROWN, LONDON.

1. Memoirs of John, Duke of Marlborough; with his original Correspondence, collected from the Family Records at Blenheim, and other authentic Sources, in 3 Vols. 4to., 9*l.* 9*s.*, and a few were printed on Imperial paper, with the arms emblazoned, 18*l.* 18*s.*

A Second Edition of the same work in 6 Vols. 8vo. with a 4to. Atlas of Plates, price 5*l.* 5*s.* boards.

2. Memoirs of the Kings of Spain of the House of Bourbon, from the Accession of Philip 5, to the Death of Charles 3, 1700 to 1788; drawn from original and unpublished Documents, in 3 Volumes 4to., 6*l.* 6*s.* A few Copies were printed on Imperial paper, 12*l.* 12*s.*

A Second Edition of the same Work, in 5 Vols. 8vo., 3*l.*

3. History of the House of Austria, from the Foundation of the Monarchy, by Rhodolph, of Hapsburgh, to the Death of Leopold the Second; 1218 to 1792. In Two Parts, forming 3 vols. 4to, with a Map of the Austrian Dominions, 5*l.* 5*s.* A few Copies on royal paper, 8*l.* 8*s.*

A Second Edition of the same work, in 5 Vols. 8vo., 3*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*

4. Memoirs of the Life and Administration of Sir Robert Walpole, Earl Orford. Third Edition, in 4 Volumes octavo, with a Selection from the Correspondence in the Quarto Edition, 2*l.* 8*s.*

The same Work in 3 Vols. quarto.

The first volume contains the History of the Life and Administration of this great Minister; the second and third comprise a variety of the most interesting and confidential Letters from GEORGE the SECOND; Sir Robert Walpole; the Duke of Marlborough; Lord Townshend; the Duke of Newcastle; Horatio, afterwards Lord Walpole; Earls Stanhope, Harrington, Chesterfield, and Waldegrave; Lord Bolingbroke; Mr. Poyntz; and Sir Thomas Robinson, afterwards Lord Grantham; from 1702 to 1744.

5. Memoirs of Horatio Lord Walpole, selected from his Correspondence and Papers, and connected with the History of the Times, until his Death in 1757. Illustrated with Portraits.

The same Work handsomely printed in 2 Vols. 8vo., 1*l.* 6*s.*

6. An Historical Tour in Monmouthshire, embellished with Views by Sir R. C. Hoare, Bart. engraved by Byrne and other eminent Artists, Portraits, Plans of Roman Stations, Towns, Castles, and Ancient Encampments, and illustrated with a whole Sheet Map of the County. This Work contains not less than ninety Plates, exclusive of the Map. 2 Vols. 4to., 4*l.* 4*s.* A few Copies on imperial paper, with proof impressions

7. Travels in Poland, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway, illustrated with CHARTS and ENGRAVINGS. The fifth Edition, with considerable Additions, in 5 Vols. 8vo, 2*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.*; also on large paper, 3 Vols. 4to.

In the quarto Edition is given a whole-length PORTRAIT of the Emperor PAUL I. in his usual Costume, engraved from an original Picture in the possession of Lord WHITWORTH, late British Minister at the Court of Petersburgh, and the Plate destroyed when the requisite number of impressions had been taken off. Printed for WHITE and Co. Fleet-street.

8. Travels in Switzerland and the Country of the Grisons. The fourth Edition, with an Historical Sketch and Notes on the late Revolution; in 3 Vols. 8vo., 1*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.*; and in royal 8vo. with Smith's Views, 3*l.* 3*s.* An Edition of this Work was printed in two Volumes imperial quarto, illustrated with Smith's Views.

9. Account of the Russian Discoveries between Asia and America. To which are added the Conquest of Siberia, and the History of the Transactions between Russia and China. Fourth Edition, with very considerable Additions, and Accounts of Voyages never before published in the English language, with Charts and other Engravings, 8vo., 12*s.* A few copies only on imperial paper, 4to.

10. Biographical Anecdotes of Handel and Smith, in 4to, with Portraits, and select pieces of Music composed by J. C. SMITH, never before published.

11. Literary Life and Miscellaneous Works of BENJAMIN STILLINGFLEET, in 3 Vols. 8vo., 2*l.* 2*s.* A few copies were printed on Royal paper with coloured plates, 3*l.* 3*s.*

12. A Letter on the Secret Tribunals of Westphalia, addressed to the Countess of Pembroke.

13. A Sermon on the Excellence of British Jurisprudence. Preached before the Hon. Sir Francis Buller, Bart., and the Hon. Sir Nash Grose, Knight, March 10, 1799, in the Cathedral Church of Salisbury, and published at their request.

14. A Sermon preached at the Anniversary Meeting of the Sons of the Clergy at St. Paul's, in 1807.

15. Explanation of the Catechism of the Church of England.

16. An Abridgment of Secker's Tract on Confirmation.

PART I.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE KING.

From 1689 to 1700.

PART I.

CHAPTER 1.

1689—1692.

Biographical anecdotes of Charles Talbot, duke of Shrewsbury—He renounces the roman catholic religion—Takes an active part in the Revolution—Acquires the confidence of king William—Appointed secretary of state—Difficulties of his situation—Regrets the alienation of the king from the whigs—Commencement of his correspondence with the king—Solicits permission to resign—Remonstrates against the system of domestic policy, and the proposed dissolution of parliament—Resigns the seals, and heads the opposition in the house of lords—The king disgusted with the tories.

TO elucidate the Correspondence, which we are about to submit to the reader, it will be proper to introduce a brief account of the life and character of a minister, who possessed the full confidence and esteem of his sovereign, and whose administration comprises one of the most critical periods in our annals.

Charles Talbot, twelfth earl, and first duke of Shrewsbury, was descended from one of our most illustrious families. He was son of Francis, eleventh earl, by Anna Maria daughter of Robert, second earl of Cardigan. His parents being roman catholics, he was brought up in the strictest principles of that religion, and received a learned education, as appears from numerous comments and remarks on authors, in every branch of literature, which he left in manuscript.

He was born in 1660. His father being killed in a duel*

* This duel was occasioned by the discovery of the duke of Buckingham's licentious connection with the countess of Shrewsbury, which has been so often mentioned by our

with the duke of Buckingham, he succeeded to the title in the eighth year of his age. Having arrived at years of discretion, he began to entertain doubts concerning the doctrines of the roman catholic church, which in the reign of Charles the second still formed a subject of the most violent controversy. In this state of mind, he recurred to the advice of the celebrated Dr. Tillotson, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury. He drew from his grandfather, the earl of Cardigan, and from several learned priests of the romish communion, the principal arguments, in favour of the church in which he had been educated. These he submitted to Dr. Tillotson for his replies; and after a studious investigation of the question for two years, he acquiesced in the reasoning of the learned divine, by renouncing the roman catholic religion, and becoming a convert to the church of England. His first attendance on our public worship, was at Lincoln's Inn Chapel, May 4, 1679, in the twentieth year of his age.

The young earl of Shrewsbury gave a convincing proof of his sincerity, by refusing to reconcile himself to the church of Rome, after the accession of James, though this refusal drew on him the resentment of his bigotted sovereign. The same conviction led him to be among the foremost of those, who opposed the measures of that monarch, for the re-establishment of the roman catholic worship; and as early as May, 1687, we find a letter, conveying professions of his zeal to the prince of Orange, who was then endeavouring to gain partisans, and ascertain the state of the public mind in England. He was likewise one of the illustrious seven, who signed the Association,* in June, 1688, inviting over the prince. Convinced

---

poets and biographers. The countess afterwards espoused George Rodney Brydges, esq.; of Keynsham, in the county of Somerset, and died April 20, 1702. She always professed a zealous attachment to the roman catholic religion, and maintained a secret correspondence with the court of St. Germains. In Macpherson's Papers, we find abundant proofs of her intercourse with the Stuart agents: an intercourse which exposed her son to unjust suspicions, and involved him in frequent embarrassments.

* See the draught of this celebrated Association in Dalrymple, App. to B. 5, p. 107,

of the necessity of an immediate revolution, he even mortgaged his estates; and repairing to Holland, offered his purse and sword to our great deliverer.

He accompanied the prince to England, and encouraged him with the hope of a general declaration in his favour. While William remained in suspense at Exeter, we are informed by bishop Burnet, that the earl of Shrewsbury was one of the nobles, in whom he chiefly trusted, and by whose advice he drew up his famous Declaration. In the progress of the Revolution he took an active part, and was one of the three peers dispatched by the prince, to treat with those sent by James. In the convention parliament he espoused the cause of William, and opposed the impracticable measures of those, who wished to act in the name of James the second, to establish a regency, or to place the crown on the head of Mary. While things remained in confusion, the earl of Shrewsbury, the marquess of Halifax, and the earl of Danby were the peers to whom the prince opened his views, and intimated his resolution of returning to Holland, if the parliament should persist in the arrangements, which they seemed disposed to adopt.

On the settlement of the new government, in which Shrewsbury had taken so active a part, he was nominated one of the privy council, appointed secretary of state, and intrusted with the lord-lieutenancy of three counties. His services, amiable character, deportment, and talents for business, endeared him to William, who considered him as the only person capable of conciliating the two rival parties; and from his general popularity, called him the "king of hearts."

In his principles Shrewsbury was a moderate whig; but from the circumstances in which he was actually placed, he identified himself with the zealous members of that party, who were selected to fill the principal offices of state. After so sudden a change,

---

attested by the ciphers of lords Devonshire, Danby, Shrewsbury, Lumley, the bishop of London, admiral Russell, and Mr. Sidney.

however, it could not be reasonably expected, that all classes should long remain satisfied, or readily coalesce in the support of the new government. Cabals and machinations naturally arose. The king was alienated from the whigs, by a suspicion that they intended to diminish his prerogative, and reduce him to a mere cipher; and his feelings were peculiarly wounded, by their refusal to grant him a permanent revenue. The whigs, on their part, were jealous of the partiality manifested by the sovereign to his foreign favourites; disgusted with his cold and repulsive demeanor, and alarmed by his endeavours to extend his authority. Of these contentions the tories adroitly profited. They expatiated on the bias of their principles in favour of the prerogative, and professed their anxiety, to grant those powers and advantages, which were withheld by their opponents. Scarcely a year therefore elapsed, before the king manifested a strong aversion to those, who had taken the most active part, in calling him to the throne; and an equal partiality to those, whose principles were considered as unfavourable to his title.

Shrewsbury enjoyed too high a share in his confidence, not to be affected with this change in his sentiments; and foreseeing that he must either renounce his own principles, or withdraw from the party, with whom he was hitherto identified, he became anxious to retire from a situation, surrounded with perils, and ill adapted to his temper, naturally timid and indecisive. These feelings and apprehensions gave rise to the Correspondence which we here present.

THE EARL OF SHREWSBURY TO KING WILLIAM.

[Complains of the dilatoriness and lethargy in every branch of administration—States his own ill health and incapacity, and earnestly requests permission to resign.]

"*London, Aug. 27-Sept.* 6, 1689.—Sir; I have lain in hopes ever since Sunday to have waited upon your majesty myself, but it seems with very little reason; for instead of that happiness, I have not been able to rise out of my bed, and when I shall, God only can tell; but it is like to be so long, I should be very wanting

to your majesty, my country, and myself, if I did not now lay before you, your own interest, as well as my condition. I am sure, Sir, your affairs want somebody, whose vigorous health, as well as zeal, might carry them on, with greater spirit and dispatch, than hitherto they have seemed to move with. Every thing at present appears to be at a stand: there has been no fresh committee, nor other council, since I last waited upon your majesty, except that of twelve privy counsellors, which met last night by my appointment. I was not able to attend, but am informed no one thing was done. I do not endeavour to excuse myself from my share of blame in this ruinous lethargy; but really, Sir, my indispositions of late have been so frequent, and I have the comfortless prospect of so very ill health, for the future, that I am very sensible how incapable I am, to supply a place, where diligence and industry are absolutely requisite. They are talents that naturally I never had, and have now more reason than ever to despair of obtaining, since ill health, as well as a lazy temper, join to oppose it. Sir, there are a thousand faults I see in myself, and more than a thousand that, without question, others see, which made me sensible of my own unfitness for the employment I am now in. I shall ever pay all the acknowledgments and gratitude imaginable for your majesty's first and partial choice of me; and the best return I can now make is, to beg you will be pleased to confer it upon somebody, easily to be found, in all respects more capable of serving you. If there is any thing that I think I ought to value myself upon, it is for having always told you sincerely my thoughts; and I do now, with the same sincerity, affirm in the presence of God, that I think it would be for your majesty's interest, to permit me to retire from a station that, through many incapacities, I am unable to discharge as I ought.

"I am apprehensive your majesty may think it will look like a hardship done to me, and that your good nature may over-rule your judgment, to refuse me what I thus earnestly beg. I will therefore trouble you with some circumstances relating to myself, that would otherwise be unnecessary and impertinent. Your

majesty may remember the employment of secretary of state was what I never solicited for, but rather accepted with fear and trembling, being all my life sensible of my own inabilities, though at that time I could not foresee the accidents that have since happened to increase them. My constitution is extremely impaired, by the frequent returns of these fits, which nothing but rest and quiet can deliver me from; and the consciousness of an obligation to do business, my health will not permit me to follow, puts my mind upon the rack at the same time with my body. The importunities of some people, private business, with my own fears of neglecting the public, make my whole life one continual disquiet; and at the same time I thus torment myself, I also prejudice your majesty's affairs, which are neglected by me, whilst they might be effectually done by many others.

"A man in good health and good humour, who is well pleased with the world, and has reason to be so, will undoubtedly take more pains about the things that relate to it, than one whose indisposition, both of body and mind, has levelled his ambition to desire nothing but ease and quiet. I beg your majesty not to interpret what I write, as the melancholy whimsy of a sick man, that will vary with the next recess of his fever; but as the instant prayer of a faithful servant, who knows his life and fortune must have the same fate with you and your government; and therefore, by interest, as well as inclination, is obliged to advise what he thinks must conduce to their safety.

"It is some weeks since I have had it in my mind to make this humble request to your majesty; but did not dare go about it till now, that I think your affairs are in so good a posture, that I shall not be suspected of designing to make friends with any other party, which in me would be folly ever to attempt. But what presses most my desiring it at this time, is the great decay of my health, which makes the burthen of my place (too weighty for me at best) now insupportable. I have only at present to beg your majesty will believe I am in earnest, in what I ask, and that when in appearance I shall not be under the same

strict obligations of studying your service and interest, my poor credit and life shall, to the utmost, be employed in whatever you will command. The tediousness of this letter has already taken up too much of your time. I shall expect no other answer, but somebody to demand the seals, and that they may be bestowed in honest and able hands, is the hearty prayer of," &c.

THE KING TO THE EARL OF SHREWSBURY.

[Refuses to accept his offer of resignation—Refers him to lord Portland.]

"*Hampton Court, Aug.* 18-28, 1689.—I cannot conceal my surprise at the contents of your letter, which I received yesterday: as I did not imagine that you would propose to quit your post, at this particular time, which would prove very prejudicial to my service, as well as to my kingdom. With the view, therefore, to explain clearly my sentiments, I shall send lord Portland* to you to-morrow, to whom alone I have

* Among the dutch adherents and favourites of king William, William Bentinck, earl of Portland, claims the first place. He was descended from a noble family of Guelderland, and born about 1649. After receiving a liberal education, he was placed about the person of the prince of Orange, in the quality of page of honour. He manifested his attachment to the prince, by attending him during an attack of the small-pox, at the risk of his own life, though he had never had the disease, and it was then regarded with scarcely less horror than the plague. This proof of affection made a deep impression on the mind of William; and his esteem for so devoted a servant was strengthened, no less by a sense of gratitude, than by a full conviction of his integrity, prudence, and eminent abilities.

When the revolution in Holland took place, which restored William to the power and dignity of his ancestors, Bentinck was among the first who shared his favour. After filling a superior place in his household, he was promoted to the command of the first regiment of guards. Notwithstanding his youth, he was employed in missions of great delicacy and importance; managed the correspondence with the patriots in England; and superintended the preparations for the memorable expedition of the prince. He accompanied him to England, and held the first place in his confidence at that critical period.

The change of government being effected, he was rewarded with all the honours which his grateful master could bestow. He was appointed groom of the stole, keeper of the privy purse, and admitted into the privy council; and, being naturalised, was raised to the peerage, by the title of earl of Portland. To maintain this dignity,

communicated your letter, and I will not mention it to any other person. You will please to follow the same example; and no one can have more esteem and friendship, I beg you to believe, than I have."

REPLY OF THE EARL OF SHREWSBURY.

[Will submit, though reluctantly, to his majesty's commands—Expatiates on the difficulty and delicacy of his situation, and of finding proper and faithful persons to act under him—Repeats his wish to retire.]

"*London, Sept.* 1-11, 1689.—I make no question, Sir, but

---

the king rewarded him with liberal grants in land and money, notwithstanding the strenuous opposition which was made in parliament, and the censures which he encountered, for his liberality to his foreign favourites.

For a considerable period the earl of Portland was the constant companion and confidential friend of his royal patron, and the chief organ of his private communications with Shrewsbury and the other ministers. He was also chosen to conduct the most delicate negotiations with foreign courts, and enjoyed a large share in the secret management of domestic affairs: nor was he less distinguished by that species of merit to which William was peculiarly partial, for he signalised his courage and skill as a soldier, both in the Low countries and in Ireland.

His want of familiarity with the English language and customs, his reserved temper, and above all, the odium attached to his foreign birth, precluded him from cultivating those friendships and connections, which attract popularity and give stability to favour. Hence his character has been handed down to posterity in the colours of prejudice; and while his integrity, prudence, and sterling sense have been overlooked, he has been loaded with the imputation of pride and arrogance, and contempt for the nation from whom he derived his wealth and consequence. Indeed he himself candidly acknowledged this natural reserve and coldness, which in him, as in his royal master, obscured many great and solid virtues.

In the course of this correspondence we shall find him supplanted in the royal favour by a younger rival, Arnold Joust Van Keppel, afterwards earl of Albemarle, which induced him to resign his employment at court. But nothing could weaken the high esteem which William entertained of his fidelity, zeal, and prudence; and he not only continued to entrust to his management the most delicate and confidential affairs, but even on his death-bed gave him the strongest tokens of the most affectionate regard.

On the demise of William, Portland lost the consequence he had so long enjoyed, and withdrawing to private life, distinguished himself by acts of charity and benevolence till his death in 1709.—The best account of the earl of Portland is given in Birch's Biographia Britannica; art. *Bentinck.*

my lord Portland has done me the right, to inform your majesty how entirely I am resigned to whatever you may command, but at the same time, I am sure his judgment is so good, and his affection for your service so real, that he could not but be convinced, what I proposed was for the public good; and I hope though he would not promise me, he represented it as such to your majesty.

"My incapacity to go through with a place of so much toil and trust, does every day grow more apparent, as my health and strength decay; and I am sure if my spirits be not disburthened of the vexatious thoughts, that my weakness is a prejudice to my king and country, the trouble of my mind will itself be sufficient to hinder my recovery. Upon discourse with my lord Portland, I find what your majesty had already hinted to me, concerning Mr. Vernon,* to be the thought of many,

* James Vernon, esq. was descended from an antient and honourable family, long seated at Haslington, in the county of Chester. He was the son of Francis Vernon, esq., by Anne, daughter of Mr. Smithes, an alderman of London; and at an early period seems to have been placed in the office of the secretary of state. Here his zeal and diligence attracted the patronage of the earl of Shrewsbury, who appears to have employed him as his private secretary. The imputation here alluded to, we are not enabled to explain; but it is evident, that the experience of his noble patron completely removed it, and that he was not employed as under secretary of state, but treated with a degree of familiarity and confidence, which seldom occurs between a patron and his dependent.

We shall find Mr. Vernon superseding sir William Trumbull as secretary of state, a post which he continued to hold during the whole reign of king William. He also represented the city of Westminster in parliament, and made no inconsiderable figure in the House of Commons. Soon after the accession of Anne he was removed from his post, and his services rewarded with the lucrative office of teller of the exchequer. He died at the advanced age of 83, in January, 1726-7, and was buried at Watford in Hertfordshire. He left several daughters and two sons, James, a commissioner of the excise, and Edward, afterwards admiral of the white, and the conqueror of Porto-bello: both fixed their residence in the county of Suffolk. His family was dignified with the peerage in the person of his grandson Francis, who in 1766 was created baron Orwell of Newry, in the county of Down in Ireland, and in 1777 viscount Orwell and earl of Shipbrook. He was the only surviving male of his lineage, and dying at his seat of Orwell Park, near Ipswich, in 1783, the title became extinct.—Ormerod's History of Cheshire—Communications from W. Wood, esq. Bluemantle.

only with this aggravation, that whereas people have an ill opinion of Dr. Wynn, as suspecting his disaffection only to this government, they have a prejudice to the other's morals in general, and think this was not observed when he was under Mr. Fenton. But he can be faithful to none, it seems, now. I must either employ those that are believed to betray your majesty, or, in the condition I am in, take the whole drudgery upon myself—a hardship I hope your majesty will not impose upon me; for, as on the one side, I am fully resolved to make use of none that shall be suspected by the world, so I am sure I will take nobody into a place of that trust, I cannot well confide in, thinking it reasonable in what relates so nearly to myself, to have my share of blame with the rest of mankind.

"Since I saw my lord Portland, I have made some inquiry concerning men proper for such employment, and cannot find one, with whose ability and integrity I can satisfy myself. It is no wonder I should have acquaintance with none; for business was a thing I had always so little to do with, or inclination for, that the men of that trade were ever strangers to me.

"You see, Sir, how impracticable it is for me to remain, being reduced to one of these three hardships, besides what I have mentioned, of my health: to employ either those, other people cannot trust, such as I myself cannot confide in, or else take the whole toil upon myself. Of the two first, I am sure I will do neither, and hope your majesty will not expect the last from me, the business and subjection being much greater than my parts or constitution could be able to perform. Though men are often very ill judges of their own excellencies, yet generally they may be credited, when they speak to their own defects. I would therefore beg your majesty to believe me, when I do upon my word affirm, I am not the same man I was six months since; neither my memory, my application, nor my judgment is, or I believe ever will be, the same. If your majesty will have me continue, I shall infallibly expose your business and my own reputation and health. I have yet, God be thanked, just enough understanding, to know that I am now fit

for nothing: if you are not enough convinced already, it would be better to trust me than to find it by your own experience; that would cost both your majesty and me too dear. Indeed, Sir, my spleen does not make me so ill a judge of myself as you perhaps imagine; I never pass three hours of the day, nor night, without violent torment, of which my mind has its share as well as my body. Nothing but rest from business and retirement can ever make me a reasonable creature again: but dispose of me, Sir, as you please, for I will show you that I am to the last, Sir, your majesty's," &c.

To this letter the king making no reply, the earl of Shrewsbury applied to lord Portland, expressing the uncertainty of his situation, and desiring to be informed of his majesty's pleasure.

"*London, Sept.* 4, 1689. I have troubled the king and your lordship so much already, that if it were only my own business, I would be no more thus impertinent; but his majesty's concerns being something mixed with it, makes me venture to give you this one farther trouble. Since you did me the favour to call here, I writ one letter to the king, who was pleased to return word, there was no answer; upon which I am a little at a stand to know what his majesty in the meantime expects from me; whether he resolves to put another in my place, or that I shall continue. Two words from your lordship to clear this difficulty would be great charity to a man, whose mind is enough disturbed without this uncertainty. My lord, the short state of my case is this: if the king looks upon my retiring as disrespectful to him, or any way prejudicial to his affairs, I will suffer all extremities rather than insist upon it; but if it could be represented with the advantages the thing naturally bears, as intended in the first place for his service, it would be a great obligation to, my lord, &c."

This application extorted a reply from the king, in which he again solicits him to continue in office.

"*Hampton Court, Sept.* 5—15, 1689. I should not have deemed

it necessary to reply to your last letter, had I not perceived from that which you wrote to lord Portland, that you expect an answer. I therefore entreat you to relinquish at present your intention of resigning the seals, as it would be greatly prejudicial to my service, and to the welfare of my kingdom. I will use all my endeavours to render your post as little troublesome to you as possible, and I will speak to you on the subject, when I have the satisfaction of seeing you. I likewise assure you, that no man can feel more friendship for you than I do, of which I will strive on all occasions to give you the most convincing proofs."

Thus disappointed in his wish to escape from the trammels of office, Shrewsbury observed with equal anxiety and regret, the increasing alienation of the king from the whigs; and his arrangements for proroguing the parliament, in which they were predominant, preparatory to a dissolution and change of ministry. Against this design he therefore remonstrated, in respectful, yet manly terms, in a letter, dated December 22, 1689.

"Sir;—Since I received your majesty's commands by my lord Portland, I have considered, as well as I am able, the present posture of your affairs, and how they may at this time suit with an adjournment so long as he proposed, which, as I remember, was to the middle of the next month. I think myself obliged in duty to lay before you my sense of this matter; and though I am very incapable to put any thing in writing, fit for your majesty to speak to your parliament, yet that is not the only reason makes me now decline it, but a thorough conviction that an adjournment for so long a time can be of no advantage, but will certainly prejudice your business. For the nation will reasonably conclude, either that you part with your parliament in anger, which is a bad preparation towards the meeting it again so soon; or else that you have not that pressing occasion for money, which you and your friends have often represented to them, since you defer their consideration of it for three weeks, without any apparent good reason. Besides, it will more and more exasperate the house of commons against those persons who have

had the ill fortune to be named in this last address, since they will be pointed out as the authors of this advice.

"By what I find from my lord Nottingham the argument used for this delay is, to expect the church of England men to return, who are gone into the country, and, he says, so depend upon this recess, that they will think themselves unfairly dealt with, if they are foiled in this expectation. What encouragement they had to rely upon it I do not know; but supposing they had good grounds, I will say the same thing to your majesty I did to him, that your resolution in this, must be suitable to what you determine, either to join or not join with the church of England.

"I think your majesty does not suspect me to be so violently biassed to either of these parties, as not to see the faults of both, and the dangers that may likely ensue in joining with each of them. I wish you could have established your party upon the moderate and honest principled men of both factions; but as there be a necessity of declaring, I shall make no difficulty to own my sense, that your majesty and the government are much more safe depending upon the whigs, whose designs, if any against, are improbable and remoter than with the tories, who many of them, questionless, would bring in king James, and the very best of them, I doubt, have a regency still in their heads; for though I agree them to be the properest instruments to carry the prerogative high, yet I fear they have so unreasonable a veneration for monarchy, as not altogether to approve the foundation your's is built upon. I hope, Sir, you will excuse this plain dealing, from a man that means your service honestly and heartily, and rather chooses to expose himself to your censure for these lines, than to the remorse of his own conscience, for having writ a speech to a purpose absolutely disagreeing with his own opinion.

"Sir, my humble advice to your majesty is, that you will be pleased not to adjourn the two houses beyond the Monday after Christmas-day; or else, that you will leave it to them to

appoint their own meeting, which will probably be about the same time. My next request is, that you will pardon this presumption from one that is with all truth, duty, and respect, your majesty's," &c.

This firm remonstrance deferred, but did not prevent the purpose of the king, for on the 27th of January the parliament was prorogued to the 2nd of April. In the interval his majesty carried his design into effect by a dissolution, and the tories were enabled to gain a preponderance in the new elections. At the same time several of that party superseded the whigs in the offices of state.

A vehement struggle accordingly ensued, between the two parties in the new parliament, which assembled in March, 1690. Among other expedients to embarrass their opponents, the whigs brought forward an act for abjuring king James, by which they hoped to reduce the tories to the predicament, either of offending the king by opposing it, or of contravening their own principles, by giving it their support. On this point the contest was carried to such a height, that the king was at length obliged to favour the scruples of the tories, by intimating his wish that the parliament would discontinue the discussion.

Shrewsbury, who had warmly promoted this act, was disgusted with these measures, and determined to deliver up the seals. William, however, was still too partial to his favourite minister, to acquiesce in his resignation, and employed the influence of archbishop Tillotson, and other friends, to divert him from his purpose. But nothing could soothe the chagrin of the noble secretary, and it was not without great difficulty that he was dissuaded by bishop Burnet from repairing to the royal presence, in a temper of mind which must have provoked a personal altercation; he however conveyed the seals several times to the king, who refused as often to receive them. He remained without acting, till the agitation of his mind threw him into a violent fever, and the seals were delivered through the hands of lord Portland. He resisted all representations to retain

this emblem of office, even till the return of the king, who was then preparing for his expedition to Ireland, and relinquished his post on the second of June.*

The ex-minister maintained his consistency by a vigorous opposition to the measures of the tory administration, and particularly distinguished himself, by the introduction of the bill for triennial parliaments into the house of lords.

William had, however, advanced too far to recede, and therefore, before the close of the year, he removed the remainder of the whigs, to confide the helm of state entirely to the tories. But in the progress of events, he had cause to regret this hasty resolution, which threw him into the power of a party, many of whom were lukewarm in his cause, others adverse to his title, and all incapable of giving that energy to his government, which circumstances required. We find him, therefore, on his return from the campaign of 1693 disgusted with the mismanagement of his new ministry, and anxious to regain the confidence of the whigs. In this predicament he recurred to the intervention of Shrewsbury.

* According to lord Clarendon, he sent the seals to the king by admiral Russell: Diary, v. 2, p. 245, June 3; but we have the authority of Shrewsbury himself, in a subsequent letter to lord Somers, dated Sept. 22, 1697, for asserting that they were sent by lord Portland.

CHAPTER 2.

1693—1694.

Resolution of William to effect a new change in the administration, and reconcile himself with the whigs—Importunes the earl of Shrewsbury to become secretary of state—Remarks and correspondence on the subject—changes in the administration in favour of the whigs—Shrewsbury accepts the seals—Rewarded with a dukedom and the garter—Commencement of his administration.

WILLIAM had been fully convinced of the necessity of changing his measures, and restoring the whigs to favour, before his departure from England, in the preceding spring of 1693: and as a prelude to give them hopes, had nominated sir John Trenchard secretary of state, and sir John Somers lord keeper. During his stay on the continent, this necessity pressed more strongly on his consideration; for the consequences of confiding his affairs to a weak and heterogeneous ministry, were felt in every branch of the administration, and in every rank of the state. The marquis of Caermarthen, president of the council, and prime mover of the government, justly observed, "that the ministers were incompetent to decide one day what the House of Commons would do the next."* To add to the embarrassments of the king, they were divided by mutual jealousies, more disposed to thwart each other, than to adopt the vigorous measures which were necessary for prosecuting the war; and some in the higher as well as in the subordinate stations, were justly suspected of infidelity. The king had cause also to apprehend, that the earl of Rochester had gained a paramount influence over the queen, and was using his interest to promote the views of his party.

Strongly impressed with these considerations, William returned

* Dalrymple, Part 3, b. 2, p. 50, 8vo.

to England in November 1693, with a full determination of reconciling himself to the whigs. With this view, he endeavoured to conciliate their confidence, by dismissing the two tory admirals, Delaval and Killigrew, under whose direction the naval service had been scandalously neglected, and by confiding the command of the channel fleet to admiral Russell, the hero of La Hogue. He also took the seals of secretary of state from the earl of Nottingham.

Without a moment's delay, he summoned the earl of Shrewsbury to his presence, and offered him the vacant post of secretary, with the hope that his interposition would regain the affection of the whigs. But he either was not sufficiently explicit in the declaration of his sentiments, or shewed too strong an inclination to form a motley ministry; for the conference terminated in a warm altercation, and Shrewsbury retired in disgust to Eyford, his country seat, in Oxfordshire.

The king, although extremely mortified at this abrupt departure, did not intermit his efforts; but, unwilling to renew his personal application, at the risk of another refusal, he employed Mrs. Villiers, his mistress,* to write to the earl of Shrewsbury, pressing his return to London, and his acceptance of the seals.

In conformity with this command, she strongly urged his majesty's wish† with every argument which seemed likely to have an influence on the mind of her noble correspondent.

"*Monday night.*—I found the king in a temper I wish you could have seen, because I cannot expect it, for your being gone into the country. I saw that concern that I am sure could not but be sincere; for what design could he have in despair of you, my lord; saying to me, you were in the wrong, in an agreeable manner of you. I took the liberty to judge of your reason for

* Elizabeth Villiers was daughter of sir Edward Villiers, and sister of Edward, who was created in 1691 viscount Villiers, and afterwards earl of Jersey. She had been maid of honour to the princess of Orange, and was subsequently married to the earl of Orkney.

† This letter was written in the beginning of November, because the reply of the Earl of Shrewsbury, is dated November 4.

your avoiding to hear. I said I believed you so sincere, that it could be no other but your not being convinced, that he wished you to serve with the esteem that the world has of you. He assured me, that when he valued any body as he did you, he could easily forget some mistakes. In short, my lord, I write now by the king's commands, to assure you, that he desires you to come back, and serve him and the nation; and since you have the justice done you to be popular, I must say, you ought to return. I cannot think you can refuse him. I said I thought it was impossible, supposing you had thoughts of doing it some few days ago."

After adding that she was undone, if her application did not succeed, as the king would never forgive the disappointment, she continues:

"If you doubt what I say, you shall have a letter at or near London, to assure you of it from himself. I leave a good deal to Mrs. Lundee* to say, which would make this too long, whom I am extremely obliged to for this favour. I cannot return it but in being just to her, that she merits the trust reposed in her. I have a great satisfaction with the expectation of your answer, for I am persuaded you cannot fail in your judgment in this; since the king has condescended to ask what you are the only man that can deserve. Upon my word, I did not propose writing; but pretending to judge of your reasons, shewed that there had been messages; and therefore being thought sincere, he said I might write in his name, and be believed, though I did not know you.† He would have writ; but he does not know by whom I send, so it was not thought proper to venture his own hand. This will engage me to what I wish extremely," &c.

This letter was conveyed to Eyford by Mrs. Lundee, and the

---

* Mrs. Lundee, to whom the earl of Shrewsbury was attached, was the daughter of the Jacobite governor of Londonderry, who betrayed the confidence of William, and deserted his command during the celebrated siege of that town. She appears to have been on terms of particular friendship with Mrs. Villiers.

† Probably something omitted in the original.

most sanguine hopes were entertained by the king and his confidant, that the earl would yield to their joint solicitations. How great, therefore, was their surprise and regret, on receiving a peremptory refusal, contained in a letter to Mrs. Villiers, dated, Nov. 4, 1693.

"It is impossible to be more highly sensible than I am of the favourable thoughts the king has been pleased to express concerning me, nor be more convinced of the obligations I have to you, madam, for your part in this matter. It challenges all the duty and gratitude in my power, both to the king and to yourself; and could I be persuaded that my service would be of any use to his majesty, or to the public, there are no difficulties of any kind should hinder me from begging I might be employed, with the same earnestness I now beg I may be excused, because of the unfitness of my own temper for the present circumstance of affairs; and this, upon my word, is my true reason to decline what otherwise would be my interest to take. I speak this plainly, because I hope you will believe me; and if you do, I am sure you have goodness enough not to condemn me, for doing what my judgment teaches me is right, though I should be mistaken.

"If this matter be laid before the king, I promise myself justice from him. There is a word or two in your letter, that makes me tremble when I think of it; and had I not known it had been impossible this could be any prejudice to you, that thought would have gone further to persuade me than any argument I have lately heard used; for your sincere and generous proceeding in this business, has obliged me more than is possible to express."

The effect of this refusal upon the king and Mrs. Villiers will be best explained in a letter from Mrs. Lundee, written soon after her return from Eyford, from which, however, it will be evident that they still retained hopes of overcoming his repugnance.

"*Nov.* 10.—I could not write sooner than this post to you, because I did not get to London till Sunday evening. My friend* was surprised at my ill success. She said but little, but I believe

* Mrs. Villiers.

thought enough. She still wishes you could change, as she is convinced the king desires the same, with more sincerity than is possible to make you believe. She is angry, but it is in your power to make her otherwise. The severest thing I heard her say was, your obstinacy was even to a passion. But I could not suffer her to mistake so much, as to give the worst character to what deserved the best; for I told her what she called obstinacy in you, I knew was resolution and courage, in persevering in whatever your judgment directed you was right, though never so contrary to your humour; but granting you were wrong in your opinion, till you could be convinced, you are in the right to persist in it. And certainly among all the virtues, this firmness of mind justly challenges the precedency, and is the guardian of all the rest.

"Now, to comfort you for frightening you in this part of my letter, I must tell you the justice I did you was not ineffectual, for she thinks of you as I do, and what can you desire more? She told me the whole time I was away, her thoughts were employed studying how to oblige you. I think there were a great many advantageous things designed for you, to recompence the trouble of the seals; a dukedom was to have been given you immediately, and in so pretty a manner, you were not to know it till your patent was passed for it. This is a secret, and you must never take notice that I gave you the least hint of it. Believe me, this has not dazzled my eyes so much as to make me let fall one word to persuade you to come into the government. But your friend has assured me every thing goes well beyond expectation, and being assured of her sincerity, and indeed having a good opinion of her judgment, I cannot but wish you would consider once more, and do not be partial to your own sense, though I am persuaded it is very good; yet what the fortune-teller said of you, runs on my mind: 'You were one that would often stand in your own light.' I fancy you will have a letter from the king. This you must not seem to know neither, for it would injure me, and not serve you.

"Pray write to me the post you receive this; and let me hear

when you think of coming to London, and how long you will be in town before I shall see you. I believe you will hardly read my letter, but I cannot help it: my head aches intolerably."

Failing in these private overtures, William had no other resource than to make a direct appeal to some of the whig leaders, hoping that their interference would evince his sincerity, and prove successful. He accordingly made an official communication, through Mr. Wharton, comptroller of the household, which was seconded by admiral Russell, and their arguments were enforced by the private solicitations of the ladies.

MR. WHARTON TO THE EARL OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Dec.* 1, 1693.—My lord; I am commanded by the king to acquaint your lordship, that he hath not hitherto disposed of the seals, in hopes that you may be inclined to serve. In order to which, when I asked his particular directions what arguments I should make use of to induce you to it, telling him that nothing I could say (as from myself) could have much weight, your declining it hitherto proceeding, in my opinion, from what had passed betwixt his majesty and your lordship, of which I knew not the particulars, and to which I could say nothing; he told me then, and commanded me to write you word, that whatever might pass in discourse betwixt his majesty and yourself, he is very far from disliking your principles, or having any sort of unkindness or prejudice to your person: That he is more convinced every day, that it is for his interest, and that of the public, to pursue such measures in the management of his affairs, as he knows will be agreeable to you; and that if you will be prevailed upon in it, he is most confident that you shall not disagree in any thing material, and doth promise to order it so, that you shall have no sort of reason to repent your entering into his service.

"That I might not make any mistake in a matter of this consequence, by misrepresenting what the king said to me, or putting his commands into other words than he should approve of, I have this morning shewed this to him, and by his commands I now send it to your lordship.

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE EARL OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Dec.* 1, 1693.—My lord; Mr. Wharton has this morning shewed me a letter he sends to you by the king's commands, as also he has told me what steps had been made with him, to prevail with him to write it; by which it does appear the king has still his thoughts of you. What the king says in his letter, I hope for his and our service he will perform. It will be very impertinent in me to advise or persuade in this matter, but this I must say, if you accept of the seals, it will be a great satisfaction to the sober party, as they tell me. You know my thoughts, and therefore I will conclude with assuring you of my being," &c.

MRS. E. VILLIERS TO THE EARL OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Dec.* 1, 1693.—The king desired me to give you this trouble, my lord. I cannot hope to persuade, nor can I believe it necessary, since he shews that extreme inclination for your serving him, even when things go well. I say that, to convince you it can be no design, but what you wish: I thought the same before, or I had never endeavoured to have made you uneasy. I have had so great a share in Mr. Wharton's letter, that I may pretend to join with him; for I carried the message from him. But I do assure you, nobody but the king knows of my former pains in this matter. I hope with great satisfaction, since this will unite the whole party for ever, which will continue me, my lord, to be," &c.

MRS. LUNDEE TO THE EARL OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Dec.* 1.—I expect you are conquered, some hours before you receive this; for I believe you can no longer resist the importunity of the king, and the intercession of the person who sends you the inclosed. If an accident had not happened, this express would have been with you before Mr. Wharton's. If you come to town, I do not question but you will compliment her with your yielding, which will be, I find, agreeable enough to the king; and for all I know, may be one of your best reasons for doing it. For my part, I shall forbear giving my opinion at this time, because it is imper-

tinent, where it can be of no consequence. But nothing can prevent my wishing that Providence may be your director; for I own it is a difficult matter either to undertake or let it alone. You must never take notice of those particular favours, which were to be placed on you, which I told you of in my last. Write me a long letter. I do not know whether I ought to wish you to come, though it is cowardice in me not to do it; for they assure me here, that your party, as they call it, does wonders. If you think that can be true, come; but if you have the least doubt, for God's sake, never undertake it. * * * *

"I have a great deal to tell you when I see you."

Even these solicitations, however flattering, failed of success; for in the interval, Shrewsbury appears to have conceived some dislike at the conduct of the whigs themselves, which his letters do not specifically explain.

THE EARL OF SHREWSBURY TO MR. WHARTON.

"*Dec.* 2, 1693.—Sir; I am sensible it is a great misfortune to receive commands from a prince one would willingly serve, and at the same time find something in one's-self, that makes it impossible to obey him. At the time I first waited upon the king, I must declare I went with all the real intentions imaginable, to enter into his service, if he should be pleased to think me worthy of it; but something that passed then, having given a delay to that matter, I have now had more time, and some opportunities to observe how unfit I am for a court. I doubt whether I am skilful enough to agree, even with those of whose party I am reckoned, in several notions they now seem to have of things; and if that should prove so, joined with the many other defects, which make me improper for a place of so much industry and application, I beg the king would have the justice to consider how useless I should be to his affairs, and how inconsiderable I shall appear in them. Some time before I went out of town, I communicated to you a design I had, with the king's permission, of travelling into Spain. The more I consider my own temper and circumstances, the more I am confirmed in that resolution. In the mean time, I beg you will

represent my gratitude for his majesty's favour, with all the terms of duty on my part you can express; for nothing you can say, I am sure, can equal the real sense of it. But I am confident the king will not command me, nor would you advise any friend, to take upon him an employment, that he is almost certain, beforehand, he shall not acquit himself of with satisfaction to his master or the public. Shew your friendship, pray, and, if possible, make my excuse in as dutiful a manner as I mean it; and you will lay me under an obligation never to be forgotten by your's," &c.

THE EARL OF SHREWSBURY TO MRS. E. VILLIERS.

"*Dec.* 2, 1693.—When you, madam, have attempted to persuade, and have failed, you may conclude the thing is impossible; for nobody can find better arguments, nor given in so agreeable a manner; but the main objection still remains, which is, my own temper, that nobody can know the difficulties of so well as myself. Besides, since I wrote my last letter to you, I find by the votes, that there is not such a thing left in being as a party of my mind. Either they or I are much changed since last year, and be it one or the other, my figure in that station is likely to be very odd; hated by one side, for coming in the room of a man* they reckon a martyr for their cause; and not fully agreeing with the other, in the late notions they seem to have entertained. I see myself so unfit for the world, that I am confirmed in a resolution that sometime since I had taken, of travelling; but that is little to the present purpose, only that I love honestly to tell my mind, because I fancy to a distinguishing judgment, there is that peculiar to truth, that it carries its own evidence; and if I can convince you, that I act to the best of my understanding, you will have that charity for me, as to make my excuse to the king, in the best manner you can; and you may truly say for me, that I am in the highest degree sensible of this favour. But whilst I am begging you to make my peace there, I wish I did not stand in as much need of having mine made with you. I hope you will conclude

* Nottingham.

that those actions upon which one's whole reputation depends, are not to be guided by compliments; and if you knew the uneasiness it is to me, when I think I act contrary to your commands, you would believe, that I fear I never shall have an opportunity to shew you with how much esteem," &c.

The last resource was, to try again the effect of personal persuasion; and accordingly, we find, that Shrewsbury was once more summoned to wait on the king, with the hope that he would not presume to refuse a direct and pressing offer. Accordingly, when he repaired to London, to attend his duty in parliament, he was invited by Mrs. Villiers to a private interview, that she might convey to him farther communications from the king, and enforce his majesty's earnest solicitations that he would again accept the seals. While he delayed obeying this summons, the impatience of the king increased, and Mrs. Lundee was commissioned by her friend to solicit a meeting with him the ensuing day, for the purpose of imparting some information relative to a proposal, which, the next morning, would be made to him from his majesty. Shrewsbury, however, persisted in his determination, and prudently endeavoured to elude a meeting, which could only tend to increase the embarrassment likely to arise from such repeated importunities. We find him accordingly expressing these sentiments in his reply to the note of Mrs. Lundee:

"*Dec.* 18, 1693.—It was two or three o'clock this morning before I came home, and therefore could not answer your summons last night; but was infinitely surprised to find that there must never be an end of this matter. Could I have thought it possible, I would have buried myself yonder this winter in the snow. It is most certain one cannot refuse to attend Mrs. Villiers; though the more inclination one has to comply, and the more respect one has for every thing she commands, the more one is tempted to do a rude thing, and keep out of her sight; for nothing can be invented more tormenting, than to be forced to refuse, what is earnestly pressed by a person one wishes to serve and obey. But, however, this, I see, and more, must be endured; because people will not think me so sincere as really I am; and that the difficul-

ties I have made are only to be the more courted. I avoided going to Kensington the last week, though I really thought it was even unmannerly in me not sooner to pay my duty to the king; but being determined not to do what was expected, I apprehended making my court would look rather coquetting than dutiful or civil; and am afraid my being yesterday at Whitehall, has met with that interpretation.

"It falls out that a great deal of company is to dine with me, that I know not how to disappoint; and parliament hours being so very uncertain, I must beg it may be deferred to some other day, that she will command; for it will be impossible for me to day to be punctual to an hour."

Notwithstanding the peremptory tone of this letter, he was again importuned by the ladies in the name of the king; and besides a note from Mrs. Lundee, received a message from Mrs. Villiers, commanding him to wait upon his majesty, and communicating to him previous information on the subject of his audience.

MRS. LUNDEE TO THE EARL OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Thursday, one o'clock, Dec.* 26, 1693.—The message you had this morning, if I had not been enjoined, you should have had last night. Pray God you may come off without angering your master too much. I think you, of all mankind, the most impartial, and therefore I have less fear you will ever depend upon the honesty of your party, so far as to put it into the power of any of these persons to injure you.

"I was with Mrs. Villiers just now. She desired me to tell you that she would by no means have you let the king know she sent Mr. Felton with a message to you; for he desired her to see you; but she thought letting you know it by him less trouble, because I believed you are resolved. I seemed concerned this matter should be pressed so far, as a meeting with the king; but she said it is occasioned purely out of kindness to you; for making your answer positive to him, would have incensed him so much: and she says, she has all along taken great care to persuade him of your kindness to him, as well as of your truth; for my part, I am not

concerned you are to see him; for now there will be no groundless persecution. If you have time enough to throw away so, I should be very glad to see you for an hour or two any day this week; after that, you will have a day of jubilee, for you shall be vexed no more by any of us. I shall be in pain till I know how you and the great monarch part. Do not you be unreasonable, I beg you, for your devilish party are very angry already.

"Mrs. Villiers, I believe, expects a compliment from you. Write such a letter as she may see, and remember not to name Mr. Felton to the king.

"May I entreat you to burn this, and believe I will never write nor tell you a lie while I live."

We find no reply to this note; but a letter from the earl of Shrewsbury to Mrs. Villiers, will sufficiently develope his embarrassment and extreme anxiety, lest he, in his audience, should offend his majesty, as he had done before, by a frank avowal of his sentiments.

"*Dec. 25, 1693.*—I received this morning by Mr. Felton, a message from your ladyship, by which I am commanded to wait upon the king. I have such a dread, from what happened the last time, that though it is an honour I must not refuse, yet I cannot help receiving it with great apprehension; and the more, because I am given to understand that his majesty intends me the honour to offer me the seals. I have said and writ so much to you, madam, upon this subject, that I should not now repeat how unfit I know myself for that or any other place, relating to the ministry; and that nothing can prevail with me to take this employment, where I shall be useless and insignificant to the king, as well as uneasy to myself; but I think it more respectful to his majesty, that he should know this beforehand, than that I should remain in a doubtful silence till I am brought to him, and give occasion for a fresh discourse, that I have refused a place, that I am sensible too much honour is done me when it is offered.

"You will believe it very natural to wish I might be excused receiving it; at the same time that I must confess myself obstinate

in any thing of consequence, I have upon consideration resolved. I am to the last degree uneasy, when I cannot comply with the king's commands, who has shewed so much more favour to me than I could expect.

"I dare say no more now, lest this letter should not come into your hands, before you see the king; but after having laid so many obligations upon me, you must conclude me the most ungrateful creature breathing, if I am not," &c.

From subsequent letters, it appears, that Shrewsbury, apprehensive of a new altercation, succeeded in excusing himself, though with difficulty, from a personal audience.

We have no farther documents on this interesting transaction, and therefore we can only observe, that affairs continued in the same anxious suspense, till a short time before the king's departure for the continent, in the spring of 1694. He then adopted a new system of policy, by raising some of the other whig chiefs to the principal posts of his government. Admiral Russell was placed at the head of the admiralty, Mr. Montague was made a commissioner of the treasury, and soon afterwards, chancellor of the exchequer; and the favours of government again flowed on the heads of that party, though Godolphin and some other moderate tories were still retained, on the condition that they should give a vigorous support to the war. Shrewsbury himself was at length convinced that the king was sincere, and again accepted the seals as secretary of state. His compliance was rewarded with a dukedom, and the order of the garter. He enjoyed the principal share in the confidence and favour of the monarch; and from that period was considered as the head of the administration.*

* The contents of this chapter are principally drawn from the original correspondence which passed on this occasion, and which was preserved by the duke of Shrewsbury. It is indorsed, "Letters from Mrs. Villiers, Mrs. Lundee, &c. when I was solicited to accept the seals the second time." The replies of the duke are draughts in his own hand-writing, with many erasures and corrections.

CHAPTER 3.

1694.

Transactions in 1694 – Causes of the failure of the attempt on Brest—Naval expedition under admiral Russell to the Mediterranean—Military movements and intelligence—Correspondence during the absence of the king abroad, from May to July.

THE king departed for the continent on the 6th of May, leaving, as usual, the administration of affairs in the hands of the queen, and soon afterwards commenced his correspondence with the minister. The leading topics are, the unfortunate attempt against Brest, and the naval expedition to the Mediterranean, under admiral Russell.

The failure of the attempt on Brest has been ascribed to the secret intelligence conveyed by the jacobites and friends of the exiled family, to the court of St. Germains ;* but this correspondence will shew, that the causes may be more naturally traced to the publicity of the design itself, to the delays in equipment and preparation,† to the want of an adequate land force, and to the rashness of the officers entrusted with the execution. Such was evidently the opinion of the king and minister, and the latter in particular anticipated a disappointment, even before its departure.

The naval expedition to the Mediterranean was intended to curb the efforts of France in that quarter, to protect the coasts of Spain, and particularly to assist in the defence of Barcelona, which was on the point of falling into the hands of the enemy. The cautious conduct and guarded advice of the cabinet council,

* See Memoirs of the Duke of Marlborough, Chapter 6.

† The continuator of Rapin observes, that the expedition was the conversation of the town for above a month before it sailed.

will manifest the difficulties to which the king was continually reduced, and the responsibility to which he was exposed by his timid ministry. It will be seen, indeed, that this important service could not have been accomplished, had not the spirit of the king over-ruled the doubts and objections of his servants, and the unexpected opposition of admiral Russell himself, who was averse to so long an absence from England, and disliked a species of service, at that time, new and untried in the system of naval operations.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Wishes admiral Russell to sail for the Mediterranean—Hopes the preparations for the attack on Brest are matured—Regrets that his own continuance in England has prevented him from anticipating the enemy in the field.]

"*Loo, May* 14-24, 1694.—There can no longer be any doubt that the squadron which left Brest on the 7th of this month has sailed for the Mediterranean, after joining the ships from Rochfort, so that admiral Russell has no time to lose in following them; and although it is not in your department, I am well assured that you will use your endeavours to hasten his departure, and persuade him to leave to the squadron, which remains in these parts, the execution of the attempt on Brest, hoping that from the westerly winds which have for some days prevailed here, the provision or store-ships, and the galliots, with bombs, may have reached Portsmouth, and that the vessels of war may have been paid; and as the wind is now turned to the east, the whole may be ready to put to sea, or it will be too late to prevent the design of the enemy; nor do I see how this will in any manner prevent the attempt on Brest. You will, I am convinced, take care that none of these affairs shall be neglected.

"The enemy are collecting their troops from all quarters. I have also ordered ours to take the field; and I am preparing to depart from hence, and join the army in three or four days. The length of the session in parliament, which detained me in England, occasioned my losing a favourable opportunity of anticipating the movements of the enemy. This I told you before my departure, and now, that I am on the spot, I am more clearly con-

vinced of its truth. God knows when we shall again have so good an opportunity, the loss of which we shall have cause to regret this whole campaign."

REPLY OF THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Will execute his majesty's commands—Anticipates a failure at Brest.]

"*Whitehall, May 22-June 2,* 1694.—As soon as I received the honour of your majesty's letter of the 14th, I gave Mr. Russell an account, by the first opportunity, of your commands; and find by a letter I have just seen, from him to Mr. Secretary, that he himself is very fearful, that the delays in attempting the two services at once, will spoil the design in the Mediterranean. I understand, that your majesty is constantly informed by Mr. Secretary of what relates to the fleets, therefore I shall not trouble you with the repetition. The wind stands now so directly west, that I conclude Mr. Russell will very soon come to St. Helen's; but whether he do that, or remain where he now is, at Torbay, which he will do in case the wind turn easterly, in expectation of being joined by the rest of the fleet, your majesty may assure yourself, that nothing on my part shall be wanting, to press him to lose not one moment, that can be gained, to go immediately away with the squadron he designs for the Streights, and leave the rest of the fleet to execute what may be done elsewhere, of which, as I must own, I never had any great opinion, so now less than ever, because of the delays which have been made, and the alarm it has given beyond sea."*

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.*

[Lord Normanby displeased, because he was not summoned to the meetings of the council.]

"*Whitehall, May* 11-21, 1694.—Sir; you were pleased not only to allow, but to command me, to apply to yourself, in any thing I thought most proper to be communicated to you alone.

* We have here, as in other parts, placed these two first letters, dated May 11-21 and May 22-June 2, a little out of the regular order, that we may not interrupt a series of the other letters, which mostly refer to a different subject.

It has happened, that within these two days, I have been engaged in a negotiation, of which I think it absolutely necessary to give your majesty an account, just as it fell out.

"By her majesty's directions, I suppose, Mr. Secretary Trenchard, upon Wednesday last, writ letters to my lord keeper, lord Portland, privy seal; lord Sydney, and myself, to meet at his office to consult about the two services that are now expected from the fleet, viz. that of the Mediterranean and the attempt upon Brest. This being at Mr. Secretary's office, where many people came in upon business, could not be such a secret, but the marquis of Normanby* hearing of it, came to me yesterday morning, and so positively assured me, that your majesty had, in express terms, promised him to be called to all councils, when any, in what place soever, should be summoned, that he could not believe but this proceeding of the queen, in leaving him out in any consultations, must proceed from a mistake, and therefore desired me to go to her majesty, and to acquaint her, how he understood himself to be left here, entrusted with your majesty's business of the most secret concerns. I waited upon the queen accordingly, and she was pleased to permit me to tell my lord again, that your majesty's instructions to her were, that there should be no cabinet council; but lords should be summoned, sometimes one, and sometimes another, as they should be judged most proper for the business they were to advise about; only some whose employments belong to the crown, made it necessary they should not be excluded. This answer was very far from satisfying my lord, who, depending upon your majesty's promise, that he should never be left out in these cases, thought he was ill-used, and insisted much, that he should at least be summoned to all the other meetings of this kind, till your majesty should clear this point, which the queen not thinking fit to do, he has, I sup-

* John Sheffield, earl of Mulgrave, recently created marquis of Normanby, and afterwards duke of Buckingham. He was at this period only a privy counsellor; and from his personal attachment to king James, was considered as doubtful in fidelity to the reigning sovereign. Though esteemed by the king, he was not employed in any other post of trust or confidence.

pose, writ a letter to your majesty, to lay this complaint before you. I think myself obliged, having discoursed two or three times with him upon this subject, to tell your majesty that I find by him, that in case this distinction be made between him and any other person whatever, no expedient of calling him sometimes, and not others, will in the least soften this, which he calls an affront. I am very unable to offer any advice in this matter, not being acquainted with what value your majesty puts upon his satisfaction; but this leads me into the consideration, that this manner we are now in, of holding secret councils will, most certainly, give the same reasons of discontent to my lord steward, chamberlain, and all the rest, who are not constantly admitted, as if actually they were excluded; and though one may imagine, that in these summer months, there should be seldom occasion of calling these councils, since we shall, I hope, be free from the great occasions of fear from our enemies; yet frequent accidents will arise, upon which orders can never, in your absence, be given, unless some people do meet to take the lead, that otherwise would lie upon one, in advising the queen in matters it cannot be presumed she herself can be thoroughly informed of. It is much easier to lay before your majesty the difficulties of this present method, than to propose another, free from exception; but this, with submission, is clear, if business of no great moment offers, there is the less reason, upon small matters, to give a general dissatisfaction. It is most certain, my lord Normanby, if he be not called constantly, will be disobliged to the last degree; and if he should be called, and my lord steward,* and my lord chamberlain,† and perhaps some others, left out, as certainly they would have the same reason of dissatisfaction.

"I must own, that if there be any body you suspect would betray you or your counsels, it is much better disobliging that person, than entrusting him with things of a less nice nature, than such as may come before a cabinet council; but whether it be so

* Duke of Devonshire. † The earl of Dorset.

advisable at this time to hazard the dissatisfying men of consideration, who are in your interest, rather than admit them to councils, where they intend no hurt, I shall humbly submit to your majesty, begging your pardon for this freedom and length of letter."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING

[On the same subject.]

"*Whitehall, May* 15-25, 1694.—Sir; having troubled your majesty last post with a long letter of my fears, I am very glad to learn from what the queen has been pleased to tell me, of my lord steward's manner of discoursing to her, that some of them were vain. I am sure his taking it so right, will have influence upon others, who cannot reasonably complain, if he be satisfied. I cannot answer that it will have that good effect upon the marquis of Normanby, but rather believe the contrary, because he still insists upon a promise from your majesty. We find some other inconveniences in this method of meeting: it being a council that is not thought fit to be allowed, we cannot so well summon the admiralty, nor other persons, to attend, whose information we often stand in need of; but if once the land forces are on board, and the fleet joined, in order to its being divided again, as Mr. Russell shall judge proper, the other service of this summer will, I hope, afford less difficulty."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[On some favour requested for lord Montagu—Wishes to resign the lord lieutenancy of North Wales—Recommends lord Carberry as his successor.]

"*Whitehall, May* 18-28, 1694.—Sir; with this, your majesty will receive a letter from my lord Montagu,* which he has communicated the contents of to me already. There is no question but his family and his estate make him fit to receive any honour your majesty may think proper to confer upon any body; and I must own, I have ever lived so kindly with him, and wish him per-

* Ralph lord Montagu, afterwards duke of Montagu.

sonally so well, that I should be glad of any mark of favour your majesty should be pleased to shew him; but much doubting whether at a time you seem to have closed your intentions of promotions of that kind, you will be disposed to grant such a favour as he has asked, I think it may not, on the other side, be improper to give a doubtful answer, till such a time as your majesty shall return. You will then be best able to judge how far it may be fit to oblige a man, who is certainly very able, and I believe may be made very willing to serve you. Before I close this letter, I cannot but observe to your majesty what I have already taken notice of, that you have been pleased to confer upon me the honour of being your lieutenant in North Wales, where I have neither estate nor acquaintance, and consequently no interest to serve you, as one in that post ought to do. I always understood it was for want of somebody better qualified, that I was put thereupon, and that when any fit person could be found, I should be discharged; your majesty will allow me now to present my lord Carbury* to you, for whose fidelity and service I will be answerable. I did not offer him to you sooner, because I could not believe that he would accept such a half-lieutenancy without pension, when his father, of much less merit, was president of the whole, with a considerable allowance. Whatever my lord Carbury may have done in quitting the admiralty, that may have been displeasing to your majesty,† I must ingenuously own myself to have been in great part the occasion of, and pretend to more interest in him, than in any one man alive; and if your majesty will, upon my word and consideration, allow him this mark of your confidence, I am sure you will gain a man of very good parts and courage to your service. And if the obliging me be any argument, you will do it much more than you can believe, from the consequence the thing appears to have, since much more, as to

* John Vaughan, earl of Carbury, or Carberry, in Ireland, and baron Emelyn in the county of Caermarthen.

† He left the admiralty in 1690, about the time that the duke of Shrewsbury resigned the seals.

my particular, depends upon it, than your majesty will easily imagine.

"Sir, I have been so much more troublesome to you than I designed, that I must beg you will order Mr. Blaithwayt to make answer to such things as you shall think fit, and not trouble yourself, unless with what you judge proper only for your own knowledge."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Disapproves the marquis of Normanby's pretensions—Grants the lieutenancy of Wales to lord Carberry—Urges the departure of the fleet.]

"*May 22-June* 1, 1694.—Since the departure of the last courier, I received, at Loo, your letter of the 11th, and here this morning those of the 15th and 18th. It is true, that I did promise my lord Normanby, that when there was a cabinet council, he should assist at it; but surely this does not engage either the queen or myself, to summon him to all the meetings, which we may order, on particular occasions, to be attended solely by the great officers of the crown, namely, the lord keeper, the lord president, the lord privy seal, and the two secretaries of state. I do not know the reason why lord Sydney* was summoned to attend, unless it was on account of some business relative to the artillery, which, however, might have been communicated to him. I do not see that any objection can be made to this arrangement, whenever the queen summons the aforesaid officers of the crown, to consult on some secret and important affair. Assuredly that number is fully sufficient, and the meeting cannot be considered as a cabinet council, since they are distinguished, by their offices, from the other counsellors of state, and therefore no one can find fault if they are more trusted and employed than others.

"I agree entirely with you, that if lord Normanby is admitted, all those who have ever attended any cabinet council, should likewise have a seat. Doubtless the queen communicates to him

* Henry Viscount Sydney, afterwards earl of Romney, one of the king's friends, master of the ordnance.

the business, that is to be discussed, and places confidence in him, with which he ought to be contented; but if he forces us to have a regular cabinet council, merely that he may attend, and when we do not deem it advantageous for the welfare of our service, it is assuming too much.

"I have received the letter which you sent me from lord Montagu, on the subject of which, it will be more proper to give a verbal than a written answer, and therefore it must be deferred till my return.

"I am willing that lord Carbury should be appointed lord lieutenant of North Wales in your place, as you seem so desirous of it, and I am always happy to oblige you, when in my power. I am under great uneasiness lest our squadron should arrive too late in the Mediterranean. If you could expedite this business, by writing to admiral Russell, or by dispatching the ships that remain, it would be of the utmost importance."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Wishes to suspend the appointment of lord Carbury, in favour of lord Macclesfield—Recommends the grant of some of the Irish forfeited lands to lord Bellamont.]

"*Whitehall, June* 1-11, 1694.—I shall ever acknowledge the favour your majesty has been pleased to do me, in allowing that my lord Carbury might be lord lieutenant of North Wales, much above what the thing seems to bear, because I esteem it as a trust you were pleased to repose upon my passing my word, in which I assure you, Sir, I am never capable of deceiving you willingly. But having accidentally mentioned my intention of begging this favour of your majesty, before I had received your letter, but after I had sent mine to ask it, to a friend of my lord Macclesfield's; I understood my lord had so set his heart upon the hopes, some time or other, of coming into this employment, that though he is not ill satisfied that I had it, who he was sure would surrender it, whenever your majesty should find it for your service; yet, if it should fall into my lord Carbury's hands, who would be likely to desire the continuance of it, it would very much put him out of humour.

"I having never mentioned this to my lord Carbury, any other-

wise than to find whether he would accept it, if offered, have not taken notice to him of your majesty's favourable intentions towards him, because I thought it was not for your service to disoblige my lord Macclesfield, and that, perhaps, a little time might make this matter more easy, either of the one side or the other; so that for the present, Sir, I continue as your majesty was pleased at first to command.

"I suppose my lord marquis of Normanby has acquainted your majesty in a letter from himself, that he is not satisfied in being left out, because the meeting is not to have the name of a cabinet council. It seems as if he would be contented if he might be called at some other times, with the two lords with the white staves.

"Compassion will not permit me to refuse seconding what my lord Sunderland says, he has writ to your majesty, in behalf of my lord Bellamont,* that he may have some forfeited lands in Ireland. His condition I really believe is necessitous to a great degree, and there are several persons, members of parliament, who lay great weight, and think his friends obliged to see him taken care of. He seems to the world to have been displaced, for a reason that would do your majesty great prejudice to have it believed that it sticks with you. As to indiscretions, Sir, I will not be answerable for him, but dare engage, that no man living is more faithful and zealous to your majesty and your government, even under these hardships, than he is."

---

* Richard Coote, son of Richard lord Coloony, went over to the prince of Orange at an early period, and was consequently attainted by king James. He was restored after the Revolution, created earl of Bellamont, made governor of the county of Leitrim, and appointed treasurer to the queen. But his violent attack against lord Coningsby and sir Charles Porter, the lords justices, whom he impeached in the english House of Commons, excited the displeasure of the king, and occasioned his dismission. Being soon afterwards restored to favour, he was, in 1695, nominated governor of New York, and seems to have been intimately connected with the duke of Shrewsbury, and the whigs. His name will again appear in the affair of capt. Kidd.

See farther the account of Irish affairs in the next chapter.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[On some meditated changes in the commissions of customs and excise—Strongly recommends Mr. Molesworth, lately envoy in Denmark—Laments the death of Talmash, and the failure of the expedition against Brest.]

"*Whitehall, June* 15-25, 1694.—Sir; last night those persons met, which your majesty was pleased to direct should consider of the commissions of Customs and Excise, and came to are solution pursuant to the list I have here inclosed. I could not observe much difference of opinion, concerning the persons to be turned out, unless in relation to sir John Worden. My lord keeper, Mr. secretary Trenchard, and myself, had received several informations, though not such as we could prove, as if sir John were guilty of the two faults this commission is by every body charged with, corruption, and a bias towards employing under-officers disaffected to your majesty's government. Upon these accusations we three were inclined to think it proper he should be removed; but my lord Godolphin, who pretends to a perfect knowledge of him, did so entirely answer for him, as to the first, and differing in opinion as to the second, we thought it proper to leave the matter thus before your majesty, to direct in it as you please.

"As to sir Robert Clayton, who is marked doubtful in the list of the Customs, sir Robert Dashwood, sir Stephen Quarme, and sir John, who are likewise marked doubtful in the list of the Excise, we all agreed, that these four fall under the same consideration, as persons who neglect their attendance in their employments, and are at best so useless in them, that the commission would certainly be improved by leaving them out, and putting diligent men in their room. But then it remains a question, how far your majesty, in prudence, will consider them as eminent citizens, and persons, who all do, or should, promote loans, and other services your majesty may expect from the city. For these reasons, they are left for your majesty to determine as you please. The reasons for removing sir Richard Temple are, corruption, disaffection, neglect, and in short being good for nothing. Mr. Booth is by all agreed to be a well-wisher to your government, but so highly

charged with corruption, as it is said, he understands, nor minds, no other part of the place. Mr. , of the excise, is a person I do not know; but by the accounts given of him, suspected to be ill-inclined to the government; though as to my own particular knowledge, I can say nothing to him. Mr. , by every body known, and I believe hardly denied by himself, an avowed Jacobite, that keeps clubs, openly declaring their principles.

"Having said thus much in relation to the persons proposed to be turned out, I shall trouble you with very little concerning those offered in their room. Your majesty knows most, or all of them: only I doubt it will be necessary I should say a few words concerning one, which I myself offered, though he was readily consented to by the rest, who agreed he had talents extremely proper to make an industrious, faithful, and zealous officer, and that is, Mr. Molesworth.* I apprehend your majesty has received a disadvantageous character of him; and perhaps that same active, busy spirit, that made him an uneasy correspondent to a secretary of state, may not be an ill recommendation towards putting him into these commissions, which want warmth and zeal; and I must do him the justice, that in my idle time, having looked over many of his dispatches, and the answers to them, he was often full of his own projects, and perhaps too tedious for one that had multiplicity of business to answer; but in the concerns with Denmark, it were to be wished that his opinion had been followed in many particulars.

* Robert Molesworth, who was so strongly recommended by the Duke of Shrewsbury, is well known in the political and literary history of this country. He was born in Dublin, and married, a sister of Richard, afterwards earl of Bellamont. In imitation of his brother-in-law; he, at an early period, went over to the prince of Orange, and was likewise attainted by king James. On the accession of king William, he was rewarded for his attachment, and sent as envoy to Denmark. He offended that court however by his censures on their conduct, and still more displeased the king of Denmark, after his return, by his publication on the Revolution under Frederic the third, which changed the government from one of the most limited, into one of the most absolute in Europe. He always distinguished himself both in the Irish and English parliament, as a zealous partisan of the protestant succession, and was consequently removed from the privy council in 1713. He was restored to favour after the accession of George the first, and in 1716, created viscount Molesworth. He died in 1725.

"Upon the whole, I think the man truly honest, zealous for your government, a lover of business, painful and industrious in any employment, and very good parts to set all these at work. He has a relation in the west, by whose interest he is almost sure to come in sir Peter Colledon's place into parliament,* where I am sure he has talents to be made a very useful man for you; and if he be desperate of your majesty's favour, I foresee he will be a very troublesome popular speaker, having suffered as much for this Revolution as any man of his estate, and got reputation by his book, which is writ with great ingenuity.

"But, Sir, having troubled you, I doubt, too long upon this subject, I will only add, that in case you should think fit to remove four out of the commission of the Customs, Mr. Clark, of the house of commons, who is proposed for the Excise, would, I believe, be the most acceptable and proper person to add to the three in this list mentioned; and, if your majesty should resolve to continue sir John Worden, in regard of his long experience, I should think there would be the less occasion for advancing that other, Mr. Clark, who has now some place, which he fills very well in the Customs.

"Sometime after I had returned your majesty's answer to my lord Montagu, upon my lord Falkland's death, he came to me to offer himself, if he could be useful, to your majesty in Holland. I found he meant it as a compliment, and proof, that he was ready, in any capacity, to serve your majesty. I promised him to acquaint you with it; and I suppose whatever answer you will return, he will be no farther troublesome to you upon it.

"Since the writing this, I perceive my lord keeper and Mr. Secretary are of opinion, that Mr. Wilcox, who is likewise one of the Excise, should be removed: he was formerly a brewer, and is suspected still to continue that trade. We think ourselves more at liberty to speak of this man, without my lord Godolphin, because he is a whig, and a dissenter, though, for my own part, I can say nothing for or against him.

* In the parliament of 1695 he was elected for Camelford.

"Though I have detained your majesty with an unreasonable long letter, yet I cannot help adding a few words to lament the loss of poor Mr. Talmash. Captain Green, who has indited this inclosed relation, brought me the sad news this morning; and saying he had a message to deliver to the queen, at which he desired none should be present but myself, I immediately carried him to her majesty, where he spoke much, to the effect he has here signed. The account pretending to be very exact, and more particulars than I could charge myself with, I desired him to set them down in writing, which accordingly is done; and at the same time, by her majesty's command, I recommended to him not to divulge several of the circumstances, which, your majesty will observe, may be construed to the prejudice of some of the* , and truly, I hope, rather happened by mistake and accident than any other way; for, by a gentleman I have spoken with to-night, who was also in the action, I am informed several of the boats ran foul on one another, and others drew too much water to allow them to land at an ebbing tide, as it was when the lieutenant-general went ashore.

"Mr. Secretary will give your majesty an account, that we every hour expect what proposals will come from the fleet. I confess I have very little hope in any; and yet I perceive the town expect, since the men are on board, we should not leave their coasts at rest. I always concluded it would have been agreed between the sea and the land officers, who promoted this design, what to attempt in case this of Brest did not succeed, which I ever feared too probable; but it seems no such thing has been considered." I am impatient to rid your majesty of this tedious trouble, and remain," &c.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Regrets the failure of the expedition against Brest—Wishes another attempt to be made on the french coast.]

"*Camp of Rosebeck, June* 18-28, 1694.—You may easily conceive my vexation, when I learnt the repulse our troops had expe-

* Omitted; probably officers.

rienced in the descent near Brest;* and although the loss is very inconsiderable, yet, in war it is always mortifying to undertake any thing that does not succeed; and I own to you, that I did not suppose they would have made the attempt, without having well reconnoitred the situation of the enemy to receive them; since they were long apprised of our intended attack, and made active preparations for defence; for what was practicable two months ago, was no longer so at present. I have written to the queen, and I write to you by Blathwayte,† expressing my wish, if it be possible, that another expedition should be made on the coast of France, though I am not able to form any precise plan, not having it in my power to consult naval officers, who are naturally the best judges in such affairs.

"I am well aware that sufficient forces are not provided for any considerable enterprise; but if we could make some descent on any part of the coast, we should at least alarm the enemy. God grant that Russell may soon arrive in the Mediterranean, as from that alone we expect success in this campaign. May God confer on us this favour."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Laments the death of Talmash, but disapproves his rashness—Excuses the officers who were charged with cowardice.]

"*Camp of Rosebeck, July* 1, 1694.—I am indeed extremely

* The unfortunate attempt on Brest appears to have been made with a culpable ignorance of the state of the place, and the force of the enemy. Considerable difficulty occurred in stationing the ships of war to protect the descent, from the number and strength of the hostile batteries; and when this operation was effected, by the zeal and courage of the naval officers, general Talmash disembarked on the 18th June, N. S., with 900 men, in a small bay, to make good a landing against a force far superior, and supported by cavalry. The British troops were accordingly charged, in the moment of disembarkation, and driven back with great slaughter. As the attempt was unadvisedly made at the ebb of the tide, retreat was impracticable, and the greater part were either killed or made prisoners. The general himself received a wound in the thigh, which, after a few days, proved mortal. Even the ships, which had been brought forward to cover the landing, escaped with difficulty, after a considerable slaughter of the crews; but the only loss was two vessels of war, one of which was destroyed, and the other grounded, and was reduced to surrender.

† One of the king's private secretaries.

affected with the loss of poor Tollemache;* for although I do not approve of his conduct, yet I am of opinion that his too ardent zeal to distinguish himself, induced him to attempt what was impracticable; and from all the accounts which I have seen, the disorder that took place in the disembarkation was fortunate for us, as, had more troops landed, our loss would have been greater. This disorder probably gave rise to the reports, that some persons were not eager to land, though I am sure there are many for whose courage I can answer.

"I explained to you by the last post my opinion concerning our future operations, to which I have nothing to add; and I impatiently expect by the next post an account of the resolutions which have been adopted on this occasion. I will soon reply to you on the proposed changes in the boards of Customs and Excise."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Is not surprised at the failure of the attack on Brest—Lord Marlborough offers his services—Recommends the king to take him into favour.]

"*Whitehall, June 22-July 2*, 1694.—Sir; I never was so entirely satisfied with the design upon Brest, as to be surprised at its miscarrying, especially since the enemy had so much warning to provide for their defence. But I always concluded it was not to be attempted, in case their preparations had made it so im-

* Thomas Talmash, or as it is usually spelt Tollemache, was son of sir Lionel Talmash, of Helmingham in Suffolk, and brother of Lionel, third earl of Dysart, who inherited that title in right of his mother Elizabeth, daughter of William, second earl of Dysart, and last of the line of Murray. After improving himself by foreign travel, he embraced the military profession, and soon attained distinction by his skill and bravery. Disapproving the measures of James the second, he resigned his commission, and repairing abroad, attached himself to the interest of the prince of Orange. On the Revolution he was not only reinstated in his profession, but obtained the Coldstream regiment of guards, and was soon afterwards raised to the rank of lieutenant-general. He signalized himself during the war in Ireland, and in the campaigns of Flanders; and at the battle of Landen in particular, performed essential service, by superintending the retreat of the british infantry. His military reputation induced the king to promote him to the command of the ill-fated expedition against Brest, in which he fell a sacrifice to his ardent and enterprising spirit.

practicable as it is related now to appear to those who viewed it from the ships, but that then they had full power to try what could be done on any other part of the coast they should find more feazible, though the advantage should not altogether be so considerable as the seizing a post at Brest. But either no such second project was formed, or at least was so damped by Mr. Talmash's being wounded, that the fleet returned hither without thinking fit to try upon any other place.

"The loss your majesty has received is considerable only in two points, first, that people's expectations are raised to what I doubt the success of your fleet in the channel cannot possibly answer this year, though the landmen should all return on board; and secondly, in the person of Mr. Talmash, who was generally well-beloved, esteemed, and trusted; and though perhaps not altogether without his faults, yet when people consider what officers of the English nation remain to supply his post, it makes the loss to all who thus consider it, extremely more to be lamented.

"Writing upon this subject, it is impossible to forget what is here become a very general discourse, the probability and conveniency of your majesty's receiving my lord Marlborough into your favour. He has been with me since this news, to offer his service, with all the expressions of duty and fidelity imaginable. What I can say by way of persuasion upon this subject will signify but little, since I very well remember, when your majesty discoursed with me upon it, in the Spring, you were sufficiently convinced of his usefulness; but some points remained, of a nature too tender for me to pretend to advise upon, and of which your majesty is the only and best judge; but if those could be accommodated to your majesty's satisfaction, I cannot but think he is capable of being very serviceable. It is so unquestionably his interest to be faithful, that single argument makes me not doubt it."*

* See Memoirs of the Duke of Marlborough, ch. 6.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Laments the rescue of a convoy, laden with corn, by the french admiral, Jean de Barth—Complains of the admiralty.]

"*Camp of Rosebeck, July* 5, 1694.—You will see by Blathwayte's letter an account of the unfortunate event which has occurred with the squadron of John de Barth.* I do not comprehend where these vessels were stationed which ought to have joined the Dutch; for assuredly that loss would not have happened, and we should have done great injury to France, by preventing the arrival of the corn which they so much want. It seems as if some curse attended all the orders of the admiralty."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Suspends the intended changes in the boards of Customs and Excise, in compliance with the representations of the Treasury.]

"*Camp of Rosebeck, July* 8, 1694.—I have examined the names of the persons proposed to be re-appointed commissioners of the Customs and Excise, as well as of those who are to be replaced by others; and before I decide, it will be necessary to have the advice and opinion of the Treasury; because I see, by a letter which I have received from lord Godolphin, that it would be considered as injurious to the Treasury, and for which there is no precedent, to dispose of those commissions which are under their department, without their previous knowledge, upon which I shall expect your answer.

"Although the wind is favourable, we are two posts in arrears, and I am afraid some accident has happened to the packet."

---

* This refers to the brilliant exploit of Jean de Barth, the french commander, who, in the Summer of 1694, was sent out with a squadron, to meet and convoy, from the port of Velker, a fleet of transports, laden with corn for Dunkirk. This fleet was already at sea, and being met off the Dutch coast by the vice-admiral of Friezland, was captured. De Barth, however, approached the ensuing day, and not only recovered the convoy, but captured the vice-admiral and two other ships, and returned with his charge in safety.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Recommends a new attempt on the coast of France—Conveys hints against the fidelity of captain Sanderson, commander of the king's yacht—Complains of lord Godolphin's opposition to the appointment of new commissioners of Excise—Urges the necessity of a change in that department.]

"*July* 10-20, 1694.—Sir; I am to acknowledge the honour of four letters from your majesty of the 28th of June, and of the 1st, 5th, and 8th of July. As the three last arrived all together, upon Sunday, with the same packet-boat, I did not trouble your majesty with any thing upon the first, it relating to what is to be done by the channel fleet and land forces, of which I conclude Mr. Secretary gives a constant account; and the designs we have on foot appear so frivolous, that it is not very pleasant writing upon them.

"The fleet is now gone again to attempt something upon Dieppe, from which they were before diverted by bad weather; and I wish the same fate do not attend them again, it having blown extreme hard these two or three days. The season is so far advanced, that I believe the seamen will not advise the going into the bay, and I know nothing in these seas so well worth attempting as St. Malo's or Dunkirk; and by all the projects that ever I heard of destroying those places, it is to be effected with a squadron of light ships, and without landmen.

"Du Barth's force at Dunkirk being now so increased, nothing can be attempted there, without such a strength as may be sufficient to keep him in, which may be easily provided; and then, if* proposals be feasible, the destroying that port is become more considerable, by the growing force there, and by the injury we every day receive from it.

"It is some time since a young gentleman came to me, from France, who was bred a papist, served as a lieutenant of a ship, on board the fleet, till the late king went away; followed his fortunes into Ireland, and afterwards went on board the french fleet, where, upon some suspicion, he was seized and thrown into

* The name of the person who had offered the project here alluded to, is omitted.

prison, for above two years; and being released, came straight away, and surrendered himself to me; professing to turn protestant, and to be very desirous to revenge himself of the ill-usage he had received in France. He pressed to go on board the fleet, as a volunteer, pretending to do good service by his knowledge of their ports and coasts; but before I would recommend him to any body there, I put him upon giving me some account of the designs of the party here, which he undertook unwillingly, thinking it an employment not very becoming a gentleman. But by my persuasions, and a promise of his not being produced, he did discover some things in which I found him true, and among others, he told me he had learnt from his father, captain Terwitt, an eminent sea-captain in king James's time, and a papist, that there was no man, whatsoever, the Jacobites did more entirely depend upon, than captain Sanderson, the captain of your majesty's yacht.

"I have troubled your majesty with this long story, because I would inform you exactly of the manner I came to know this, by thinking it on the one hand a very hard thing to ruin a man upon a whisper; and yet, on the other side, the employment he is in, gives him such opportunities of betraying your majesty's person, that I cannot think it safe you should trust yourself with him again. This young man has so convinced me of his sincerity, that I have sent him to my lord Berkeley, with whom he had formerly some acquaintance; and by his behaviour as a volunteer, if there be any action, he desires we will judge of his zeal.

"I have a letter of the 9th of July, which pretends to be writ from Versailles: I have not had enough from the same hand to be very confident of the intelligence; only some posts since, he did give assurance, that Gironne was the place they did design to besiege, and so far he has told right. Now this informs, that upon the news of the reduction of Gironne, a courier was immediately dispatched from the court to the duke of Grammont, commanding in Biscay, to be by him forwarded to Madrid, with invitations to a peace, and arguments, that they could never expect assistance there from your majesty or the states.

"Three Lancashire and Cheshire men, who have been engaged

in enlisting soldiers, and buying arms for the disaffected gentlemen in those parts, have made an ample discovery of the whole matter to my lord keeper, Mr. Secretary, and myself. Whereupon Mr. Secretary and I, have sent out warrants for the seizing the persons and arms of about twenty considerable gentlemen thereabouts; and if these witnesses make good at their trial, what they have deposed before us, they will every man, both lives and fortunes, be in your majesty's power.

"But I detain you too long, Sir, before I begin to speak of what is most important, the question your majesty is pleased to require my answer upon, whether it would be an injury to the Treasury to settle the commissions of Customs and Excise, without consulting them? I am not well enough acquainted with the privileges that board pretends to, to give a positive answer to that question, but am sure it had been more direct in my lord Godolphin, to have made that representation to your majesty, when first you acquainted him with the manner in which you intended this should be settled; and if he had happened to have overseen insisting upon it, when your majesty spoke to him, sure he could not forget acquainting us with the injury, he apprehended was done to the board, since, it seems, he went directly home, and wrote to your majesty to that effect. I have discoursed my lord keeper and Mr. Secretary upon this subject, who seemed much surprised at this unlooked-for obstacle; and as on the one side they look upon some alteration necessary to the support of these two branches of your revenue, and the complying with people's expectations, who seeing the under-offices of these two boards filled generally with the most declared Jacobites of the country, think a change absolutely necessary in point of state; so, on the other hand, I find they agree with me, and would be very shy in giving their opinions of persons and their affections, at a meeting of five commissioners of the Treasury, and the addition at least of my lord president and privy seal, who will have reason to complain, if they are excluded such a public consideration. I have been told, that the last commission of Excise was formed without consulting any person of the Treasury-board, except my lord Godol-

phin: perhaps, if he had ruled this alteration, as he is reported to have done that, this difficulty would not have been started. By what I have writ your majesty will easily discern my opinion. I shall only add, by my lord keeper's and Mr. Secretary's leave, that theirs is the same, not only to the necessity of making a considerable change in these commissions, but to the impracticability of doing it, now by a meeting with all the commissioners of the Treasury; but your majesty is the only judge, and we must submit as becomes, Sir, your's," &c. &c.

DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE EARL OF PORTLAND.

[Is anxious for news from the army—Deprecates the risk of a battle.]

"*Whitehall, July* 10-20, 1694.—We have been so accustomed to hear ill news, that I begin to be very willing to compound to hear no news at all, though I hope if occasion be given for any, where you are, it will be for his majesty's glory, and the public benefit. But if I might venture to give my opinion, I should think the loss of a battle so much more dangerous for our affairs, than the gaining of one would be advantageous, that it ought not to be hazarded, if it might be avoided, without considerable prejudice to the reputation of your affairs. I do not know why I give an opinion, in a matter I understand so little, and others know so well; but we have an english proverb, that 'lookers-on see more than those that play;' and it is certain in these cases, a commendable desire of glory may bias people, who can otherwise judge the best, to enterprise those things, that, in this circumstance seem less prudent; and a man out of danger, may own being afraid, when those in it are shy of giving a safe advice. You will excuse, I hope, my lord, this freedom in one whose zeal, only, makes him speak, and is, with great respect," &c. &c.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the riots in Northamptonshire—Suspects the fidelity of lord Monmouth, lord lieutenant of the county—Declines accepting the services of the earl of Marlborough.]

"*Camp of Rosebeck, July 15th,* 1694.—With respect to the

riots in Northamptonshire, I recollect, that not long ago I was informed, that lord Monmouth* had made his peace at St. Germain's. Not knowing what to believe, you must try to discover, if possible, whether he, who is lord lieutenant of the county, has fomented or interfered in those riots; and you will please to give me your opinion, whether that employment should not be given to another person.

"As to what you wrote in your last letter concerning lord Marlborough, I can say no more, than that I do not think it for the good of my service to entrust him with the command of my troops.

"I did not receive any letters from you last post, and I have nothing to write to you from hence."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Mentions the dissatisfaction of the whigs at the report that general Trelawney was to be appointed in the place of Talmash.]

"*Whitehall, July* 13-23, 1694.—Sir; having troubled your majesty with so long a letter the last post, I should not now importune you again, but that, since the arrival of the last post, there has been a general report spread, as if there were encouragement given beyond seas to major-general Trelawney, that, in case he would pretend to the lieutenant-generalship, and colonel of the guards, in the place of Mr. Talmash, he would not fail to succeed. This is so commonly believed here, that many people have been with me to declare their apprehensions of it; and finding it a thing that will universally dissatisfy that party, which is distinguished under the name of whig, I thought it my duty to acquaint your majesty with it."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Excuses the conduct of lord Monmouth, and opposes his removal.]

"*Whitehall, July* 17-27, 1694.—Sir; I am to acknowledge the

* Afterwards earl of Peterborough.

honour of your majesty's of the fifteenth of July, which came to my hands last night.

"I can give no answer to what your majesty is pleased to inquire concerning my lord Monmouth's making his peace at St. Germain's. It is natural for a man that is very ill on one side, to desire not to be so on the other; but I dare say, let him have made what advances are possible of that kind, if he could find his account under your majesty's government, it is what he would prefer much before any such alteration; and at this time he appears in so much a better temper to act any thing for your majesty's service than you can believe, that I should not think it at all advisable to turn him out of his lieutenancy; and for his having any thing to do in that disturbance at Northampton, I dare engage he knew no more than an accidental tumult of the rabble, occasioned by their seeing corn sold in quantities out of the town, and is now quiet, without any other interposition, but that of the magistrates alone."

CHAPTER 4.

1694.

Irish affairs—Domestic transactions—Restoration of the East India company—Arrangements for the continuance of the fleet in the Mediterranean.—Correspondence from July to January.

AS the affairs of Ireland occupy a considerable portion of the ensuing correspondence, we shall detain the reader with a few explanatory remarks, on the changes of government, and the state of parties, in that kingdom.

It is well known, that Ireland did not imitate the example of England and Scotland, in acknowledging William and Mary; but that, from religious sympathy, the people, in general, preserved their fidelity to king James, and when he landed in the island, zealously supported his cause, in arms. His first step was consequently to summon a parliament, and to endeavour to crush the protestant interest, by repealing the Act of Settlement,* passed soon after the Restoration, for establishing the titles to landed property. The intestine troubles which ensued, contributed still farther to increase the animosities both civil and religious, and to render the possession of property insecure; and, therefore, the first care of William, after the reduction of the country, was, to restore the system, which had been overturned by the exiled monarch, to reward the zeal and exertions of those who had proved themselves faithful to his cause, and to dispose of the property which had been forfeited by the rebellious partisans of James. On the surrender of Limerick, which secured to him the possession of the whole kingdom, he made a temporary regulation for this purpose.

* For an account of the Act of Settlement, see Leland's History of Ireland, vol. 3, b. 6, ch. 3.

He appointed lords justices, nominated a privy council, constituted judges, disposed of the vacant bishoprics, and filled the different departments in church and state.* He thus established a temporary system of government, to manage the affairs of the country, until his regulations were ratified, by the sanction of the Irish parliament.

This object, however, was not easily attained; and it required no ordinary hand to direct the reins of government, in a country just emerging from civil convulsion, torn by feuds both political and religious, actuated by all the impulse of national rivalry, and swarming with open or concealed rebels. This irksome task, in which it was impossible to satisfy or conciliate any party, was first confided to lord Sidney, sir Charles Porter, and Thomas Coningsby, esq., under the title of lords justices. Lord Sidney being absent, he may be considered as a mere cipher. Of the other two, Coningsby was a staunch whig, and attached to the english interest; while sir Charles Porter, who held the seals of lord chancellor, had been formerly employed in the same capacity by king James, and by him considered as a fit instrument for accomplishing his hostile designs against the protestant establishment. He was, however, not sufficiently supple to promote all the views of the arbitrary monarch, and was accordingly dismissed; but this choice is sufficient to justify the inference, that he was not unfavourable to the popish interest.†

It is both needless and difficult to scrutinize their proceedings; and we shall only observe, that they soon became obnoxious to all parties. They were charged with gross frauds and embezzlements of public property, with mismanagement of the forfeited estates,

* Kennett, p. 572.

† After describing the plans of James, with regard to Ireland, and the ministers he selected, Burnett thus characterizes sir Charles Porter, and the motives for his promotion:

"The archbishop of Armagh had continued lord chancellor of Ireland, and was in all points so compliant to the court, that even his religion came to be suspected on that account. Yet it seemed he was not thorough-paced. So sir Charles Porter, who was a zealous promoter of every thing that the king proposed, and was a man of ready wit, and being poor, was thought a person fit to be made a tool of, was declared lord chancellor of Ireland." Vol. 3, p. 52.

with unjust partiality to papists, and with encouraging the depredations and excesses of a licentious soldiery. Although these charges were considered as exaggerated, if not wholly groundless, it was deemed necessary to remove them. But their dismission did not soothe the animosity with which they were pursued; for the accusation was preferred by lord Bellamont, before the english parliament; and, after undergoing a solemn inquiry, was declared unfounded. Still, however, they were not deemed safe from farther attacks, without a confirmation of the pardon, which the king had previously granted. He likewise evinced his approbation of their conduct, by the dismissal of lord Bellamont from a lucrative situation, as well as by the continuation of sir Charles Porter in the post of chancellor, and the appointment of Coningsby, who had recently been raised to the Irish peerage, to the office of vice treasurer.*

On their removal, the government was confided to the hands of the king's favourite, lord Sydney,† in September, 1692, with the title of lord lieutenant. He immediately repaired to Ireland, and summoned a parliament, which, except that name be given to the assembly held by James, had not met for twenty-seven years. It was hoped, that he would allay the animosity of parties, satisfy the contending interests of a divided people, obtain the confirmation of the Act of Settlement, and procure such supplies as so impoverished a country could furnish. He was, however, speedily involved in the same difficulties as his predecessors. He was charged with the same frauds and mismanagement, accused of the same partiality, and loaded with the same hatred. After a fruitless struggle, he was recalled by the king; and the parliament, which had evinced the most hostile opposition to the views of government, was prorogued.

A new change now took place in the Irish administration. Lord

* He was created baron Coningsby of Clanbrazil, in Ireland, in 1692. In 1695 he resigned the post of vice treasurer, but was re-appointed in 1698, and held it during the whole reign of William. In 1716 he was raised to the british peerage, by the title of lord Coningsby.

† Soon afterwards created earl of Romney.

Capel, sir Cyril Wyche, and William Duncombe, were, in the commencement of 1693, appointed lords justices. This commission comprised no less contrariety of character than the former. The two subordinate members, Wyche and Duncombe, were men of honour and integrity; but obstinate and froward in temper. They were jealous of lord Capel's superior influence, and favourable to the Irish interest; and sir Cyril Wyche in particular had been the confidential counsellor of lord Sydney in the measures which had created so much unpopularity among the english party. The wish of balancing their principles and views, doubtless contributed to the choice of lord Capel.

Henry Capel was second son of Arthur, first lord Capel, who was beheaded by the republicans, after the siege of Colchester, for his attachment to the royal cause; and brother of Arthur, first earl of Essex, who was implicated with Sidney and Russell, and whose existence was so mysteriously terminated in the Tower.

From the character and sufferings of his father and brother, it may readily be inferred, that Henry lord Capel was imbued with principles no less hostile to republican tyranny, than to the despotism of an arbitrary monarch. On the accession of Charles the second, the zeal he had manifested in support of the crown, and the services of his family in the royal cause, entitled him to the favour of the restored sovereign. He was honoured with the order of the Bath, appointed a privy councillor, and in 1679 placed at the head of the admiralty; at the same time that his brother, the earl of Essex, was raised to the office of first lord of the Treasury.

He was a distinguished speaker in the house of commons, and a zealous supporter, no less of the rights of the people, than of the just prerogatives of the crown. Hence, when the party with which he was identified, were removed from favour, he resigned his post, and became a vigorous champion of the popular cause, and the national religion: he seconded the motion of lord Russell for the bill to exclude the duke of York from the throne.* The un-

* Kennett has preserved his speech when he seconded lord Russell, as one of the best given on this memorable occasion.

fortunate fate of his brother did not damp his courage; for he continued to oppose the arbitrary measures of the two last sovereigns of the Stuart race, until the Revolution opened a new era, more consonant to his character and principles. In that transaction we find him among the most zealous adherents of the prince of Orange, and his attachment was rewarded with the office of a privy councillor, a seat at the board of Treasury, and in 1692 with the honours of the peerage, under the title of Baron Capel of Tewksbury. His sound sense, liberal principles, attachment to the sovereign, and zeal for the protestant cause, won him the patronage of Shrewsbury, and were sufficient recommendations for his appointment to the arduous post of directing the government of Ireland.

Unfortunately, however, the views which actuated the king in the choice of this new commission, were again frustrated by the discordant opinions and characters of its members; for lord Capel, a zealous whig, and attached to the english interest, was vehemently opposed by his two colleagues of different principles; and by their machinations, the king was disappointed in his hope of assembling the Irish parliament, and procuring the confirmation of the Act of Settlement, and the establishment of order and stability in the state.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Complains of the conduct of the lords justices in Ireland, for delaying to give their opinion as to the expediency of calling a parliament.]

"*Whitehall, July* 24-*Aug.* 3, 1694.—Sir; Yesterday, by the queen's command, Mr. Secretary Trenchard communicated to some lords, called upon that occasion, two letters he received, one from my lord Capel, and one from the two other lords justices of Ireland. When I saw them first, I confess I was extremely surprised, to observe they were answers to questions relating to a parliament, which, I remember, were sent them near seven months ago, by your majesty's command, and, I concluded, long since returned. They differ absolutely in opinion, as your majesty will perceive, when you read the two letters. Had

not my lord Capel's great indisposition, and the backwardness the others have shewn to come to a resolution, been a sufficient excuse for his share of the delay, I must have declared, that all three had been guilty of a neglect of the highest moment, in deferring to return your majesty an account of those questions till now, that it is so late, that were there the best disposition imaginable in Ireland, there is not time left, to repass over the summons, so as to call a parliament, before that in England must necessarily sit.

"All the lords that were present at the reading these letters, did agree, that a parliament was necessary to the welfare of Ireland, and almost all were of opinion, that, would the time allow it now, it were advisable to call one, there being good grounds to hope they would meet and act with good temper. But I must observe to your majesty, that these two lords justices have not contented themselves with giving a lame opinion, as if the parliament will not act for your service; but lest it should be tried, have artfully deferred the giving that opinion, till it is no more possible to make the experiment, before the next spring, of their observations. I have one of my own to add, that if these two gentlemen are to conduct this parliament, when it does meet, who have given their opinions that it cannot succeed, even they will have address enough to order it so, as infallibly to make good their advice.

"Sir James Montgomery's* lady was with me two days ago; and though she would not directly own, that she was ordered by her husband to come to me, yet she gave broad hints, as though she were desirous I should believe and acquaint your majesty, that if sir James might have his pardon, and leave to return to his own country, he was entirely disposed to live quietly and privately the rest of his days, at home. I gave her not much encouragement to hope any such favour from your majesty, but thought it my duty to acquaint you with it," &c. &c.

---

* Sir James Montgomery, a gentleman of good family in Scotland, was one of those changeable partisans, who often appear in troubled periods. He first took an active share in the Revolution; but in consequence of some disgust, became a zealous adherent of the abdicated king; and being implicated in an intrigue for his restoration, absconded, and died in exile.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Sends a new list for the boards of Customs and Excise—Desires farther inquiry to be made into the truth of the accusation against captain Sanderson.]

"*Camp of Mont St. André, July 23-August 2*, 1694.—Since my march of yesterday, I have been so much occupied, that I have not been able to write to you. I have considered what you wrote to me in your letter of the 10th July, respecting the changes in the commissions of Customs and Excise, and I inclose a list of those who are to remain, and of those who are to be removed. This list you will give to the queen, to whom I have also written, explaining the manner in which she will best act with regard to the Treasury. If you think of any more proper method, you may propose it to her.

"I am very much surprised at what you write concerning captain Sanderson, having always heard a good character of him. You will please to make farther inquiries whether he may not have been misrepresented. If there is likely to be any appearance of truth in the report, I own to you I should not like to trust myself in the yacht, under his command.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE EARL OF PORTLAND.

[Is pleased with the backwardness of the french to fight—Affairs of Ireland—Lord Capel thinks a parliament might safely be called—The other justices of a different opinion.]

"*Whitehall, July 27-August 6*, 1694.—My lord; You will readily believe, by what I writ in a former letter, that the news of the backwardness the French have shewn to engage, is not displeasing to me. May they continue in that mind, or when they alter, have cause to repent it!

"I did by the last post say something to the king upon the state of his affairs in Ireland, which I think in no good way of management. It is four months since his majesty demanded of the lords justices their opinion concerning the temper of gentlemen in Ireland, in case a parliament should be called. They all agree, as all the world must, that a parliament is necessary for the

settlement and carrying on the government. My lord Capel thinks they will meet in a temper to do the king and their country service; the other two differ, and think they will not in the least recede from any unreasonable demands they formerly insisted on. I confess I have some reasons to believe, as well as to hope, that my lord Capel's information is the more just; but the other two gentlemen have so long deferred, though often pressed, as I am told by my lord Capel, to give any answer, that the year is now so far advanced, that the necessary forms will not permit a session before November, the very time the english parliament will sit; so that by delays they have made that necessary which otherwise perhaps would not be advisable; and it is now impossible a parliament should meet there sooner than next spring. But at the same time, if some assurances be not given to that country, that then they may certainly depend upon one, I have cause to believe that such complaints and clamours will be sent from thence to the parliament here, as will very much obstruct his majesty's business. This is what I did not say in my letter to the king, before I had more grounds to apprehend the consequence. But if you think it worth troubling his majesty, I desire you will acquaint him with it, that he may have it in his thoughts to apply a remedy.

"My lord Capel is liked and beloved by all parties. The same, I doubt, cannot be said of the other two; and whenever the hour comes, that a parliament is to meet, if it be conducted by those two gentlemen, who have declared the session will be unsuccessful, I shall recant my opinion, and agree with them, that most certainly it will be so. I have shewn your letter to my lord Romney, and shall always be ready to obey any commands you may lay upon me. Your's," &c. &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Has submitted the list of commissioners of the Excise and Customs to the queen—On the different opinions for the continuance of the fleet in the Mediterranean—Wishes his information not to be divulged.]

"*Whitehall, July* 31-*Aug.* 10, 1694.—Sir; I attended the

queen with the list your majesty was pleased to inclose of the commissions of Customs and Excise. As to what relates to the last, I am so ignorant of the merits of the three doubtful persons, that I did not dare to give any opinion, more than that I had learnt of late, sir John Roche did not attend the board very diligently, which before was the objection to him. But in relation to the difference whether sir John Worden or sir Robert Clayton should be dismissed, I thought it my duty freely to declare my opinion now, as I had done before, to your majesty; for every day's experience convinces any body that will examine, that, besides those imputations, and partiality to his old fellow-servants, however unfit and disaffected they are, he does continually insist so stiffly and unreasonably against reforming any errors or abuses, that are practised in the office, that it is sufficient to say a thing is an antient custom, to engage him blindly to espouse it; so that whilst he remains, no reformation can be hoped for in that office, which stands in as much need of it, as any other in the kingdom.

"The lords of the committee this morning had under consideration Mr. Blaithwayt's letter to Mr. Secretary, concerning Mr. Russell's stay in the Mediterranean. If in case it cannot be so ordered, that a strength may stay there all the winter superior to the fleet the french will leave, it is certain those ships that are designed to return, must come away so early as will give the french fleet an opportunity of assisting at the siege of Barcelona, which an inferior force of your majesty's will not be able to hinder; and the reputation your arms have gained by being master of that sea, will vanish with the loss of that town in the autumn. It were, therefore, to be wished, that it might be so contrived, that your majesty's fleet might be laid up, and fitted at Cadiz, if it could be done with safety to the ships. There they would be ready to act, as you should command the next year, and be in such a place as they would certainly watch the motions of the french; that in case they should send a squadron into the ocean to be stronger here, a squadron of the like strength should be immediately dispatched from Cadiz to reinforce us also.

"It is likely, Sir, I talk very sanguinely, especially of this matter, not knowing yet the minds of my lords of the committee you advise with upon this point, nor the opinions of the admiralty, seamen, and others whose judgment must guide their lordships, to know what return you will have to it; but I am in hopes, by the next post, an answer will be returned to your majesty, what they advise and what they think feasible in this matter; and in case they should venture to give their opinions, that the fleet might be kept abroad so long, it will be absolutely necessary the Dutch be so much of the same mind as to take care for providing to refit their squadron, as we shall ours.

"I desire your majesty will take notice of nothing I write upon this subject, because it is very likely nothing I have mentioned will prove to be the opinion of the committee; but in case it should, I thought it might be of use to your majesty to give you this hint a post before, that you may be the better prepared to resolve, if it does come, no time being to be lost, if such a resolution be taken.

"I will use my utmost care to discover the truth of what is suspected concerning captain Sanderson, and give your majesty an account of it."

THE EARL OF PORTLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The king approves his proposal on the meeting of the Irish parliament—Blames the lords justices for deferring their advice—Military movements and plans.]

"*Camp of Mont St. André, Aug.* 6-16, 1694.—Sir; I this morning received the honour of your letter of the 27th O. S. I have spoken to his majesty on what you write concerning Ireland. He said, that the lords justices could not answer nor excuse themselves for having so long delayed to give their advice: that the time is elapsed for holding a parliament this year, whence those two, who were adverse to a session, have indirectly obtained their end. But since we cannot have one this year, his majesty has ordered me to inform you, that what you propose is very reasonable; and that every assurance possible should be given, that they shall have a parliament, in a manner that it may

be indubitably known. It is said, that my lord Capel is more beloved than could have been expected; but his health is so bad, that I think he will not live long. With regard to the two others, I do not know them; but there will be ample time before the meeting of the Irish parliament, to speak to the king on the subject.

"I have nothing new to inform you. We begin much to want forage; but when we move from hence, the camp we shall occupy will be equally advantageous, and we shall be so much the farther in advance of the enemy. The difference will be, that we shall give them a little more liberty, and they will not be obliged to pass the Meuse before us; but they may march to the Sambre, and traverse it under the cannon of Namur. I am," &c.

DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE EARL OF PORTLAND.

[Is gratified that the king will follow his advice in summoning the Irish parliament in spring.]

"*Whitehall, Aug.* 10-20, 1694.—My lord; I have your lordship's letter of the 6-16th, and am glad his majesty so far approves my thoughts, that he is willing we may in discourse give assurances that a parliament shall meet in Ireland in spring. I will, for my part, endeavour to make use of it, to prevent any clamours being brought from thence to the session here, which would extremely disturb his majesty's business, that meets with other delays but too many. I am," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Again adverts to the different opinions of the members of the council, individually, on the continuance of the fleet in the Mediterranean—His own reflections on the subject—Thinks the decision ought to be left to admiral Russell.]

"*Whitehall, Aug.* 3-13, 1694.—Sir; Yesterday, when Mr. Secretary Trenchard sent your majesty a letter, the result of what the committee had advised, I did not trouble you with my opinion, because I thought I had discovered something of that in my former letter, but chiefly because the committee were unanimous in no one thing, so much as resolving to give no judgment. When they were so diffident of theirs united, you may be sure I

was much more so of my own single, and therefore I had not presumed to say any more to your majesty upon this subject, but that the queen did me the honour to send for me, and chid me, saying, that in so important and nice a point, I ought not only to give your majesty an account of my own thoughts, but, as near as I could, collect the thoughts of the whole committee. It is, therefore, in obedience to her commands, and no presumption of my own, that I venture to report to your majesty, that every body agreed, the decision ought to be left to Mr. Russell, who alone could judge whether, with the assistance proposed and promised from hence, the fleet might, with reasonable safety, winter at Cadiz. My lord president* thought it too nice a point, and declared he would give no opinion; but managed his arguments so well for and against it, that I will not decide what opinion he is of; but am sure he has left himself latitude enough to be of either, as the event shall give occasion.

"My lord Normanby, the first day of the consultation, was the most clear and violent of any there for the fleet's remaining; but the next day changed his mind, and took great pains to shew his dissent. My lord steward was in the country, and my lord chamberlain† absent. My lord keeper,‡ as much as I can recollect, was so inclined for the fleet's staying, that he wished it might be represented, with all the advantage the thing will bear, of what use it would be if Mr. Russell could be supplied, as that the fleet might early be useful the next summer: my lord privy seal§ and myself were of the same mind. My lord Romney was ready to declare himself positive for the fleet's staying, and Mr. Secretary to-day owned that was his mind.

"After what was represented in Mr. Secretary's letter yesterday, there remains not much for me to say upon this subject. The

---

* Sir Thomas Osborne, so well known under the title of earl of Danby, in the reign of Charles the second; created marquis of Caermarthen in 1689, and duke of Leeds in May 1694.

† Earl of Dorset.

‡ Sir John, afterwards lord Somers.

§ Thomas, earl of Pembroke.

advantages that may ensue from the fleet's stay, are certainly more in number, and appear to me more likely to happen; but the danger that is possible from it, of more importance. If the fleet can stay, and be fitted out the next summer, nothing can be attempted by the french in those seas this autumn. You will protect the Turkey trade, both this and the next year. The next summer your majesty will certainly be master in the Mediterranean, as well as in the ocean; and if the french should avoid a battle, and coop themselves up at Toulon, such a quantity of bomb vessels might be sent as would probably destroy their fleet in port; or, if that fails, might lay in ashes many populous and rich towns upon that coast. The report of their being designed to continue there, would, in all probability, strike such a terror in France, as would incline them this winter to ask a reasonable peace.

"If the fleet comes away, the French are left at liberty to act any thing upon Barcelona, or otherwise, upon that coast, just as if no fleet had been sent. The merchant ships in those seas, and the men of war left to defend them, will be exposed to imminent danger, and that trade destroyed, because the french will remain masters, till such another fleet be sent, which will hardly be worth while again, if it be so soon to be recalled; and the great ships will unavoidably be exposed, let them come away as soon as they receive orders, to cross the Bay of Biscay in a later season than were to be wished, and are afterwards to pass through the channel, which has never been counted safe, later than the equinoxes.

"But to all these plausible arguments, that make one fond of their staying, there is one objection, that I confess is of the greatest moment to England; that if the ships proposed to be sent to refit the fleet, should either be taken by the enemy, lost in storms, or unreasonably detained by contrary winds, your ships there will many of them be unserviceable, and this nation exposed to what the french may attempt, if they should be masters at sea. When there is but a bare possibility of such a misfortune, it closes one's mouth; and I have nothing more to add, but that I hope

your majesty will think this letter only proper for your own breast, and believe it comes from one full of zeal for your own service, as becomes," &c. &c.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Is perplexed by the indecisive advice of the council on the stay of the fleet in the Mediterranean—Complains that the responsibility is thrown on himself—Has, nevertheless, given orders for its continuance.]

"*Camp of Mont St. André, August* 6-16, 1694.—I received this morning your letter of the 31st July, and I hope that the committee will be of your opinion, that the fleet should winter in the Mediterranean, namely, at Cadiz. As to myself, I entirely agree with you, for the reasons you mention; but I did not think proper to issue positive orders, without being apprised of your sentiments in England, particularly as I do not know whether the ships can be there refitted and revictualled, should the resolution be adopted for their continuance in the Mediterranean. The dutch I am assured, will give their consent, and take care to provide all the necessaries requisite for the maintenance of their ships; but unless positive orders for his continuance in the Mediterranean are speedily dispatched to admiral Russell, I fear he will be already on his return. I impatiently wait for the next post, that I may know the opinion of the committee on this affair."

"P. S. Since I wrote to you above, the courier is arrived with a letter from Mr. Secretary, of the 2nd-12th. I do not know if I rightly comprehend him, but it appears, that the committee are of opinion, that admiral Russell should winter at Cadiz, but dare not declare that opinion, through fear of being responsible for the event. I do wish that they had spoken more clearly on this occasion, and indeed they ought to have done so, to prevent my being exposed to the supposition of acting solely from my own opinion; but as there is no time to deliberate, I am reduced to the necessity of coming to some determination, and I have accordingly resolved, to order admiral Russell to winter, with his

whole squadron, at Cadiz. May God grant that this may succeed, for the good of the kingdom, and for the welfare of our allies."

REPLY OF THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Approves his majesty's resolution on the continuance of the fleet—Intelligence that the Spaniards are listening to private overtures of accommodation.]

"*Whitehall, Aug.* 10-20, 1694.—Sir; I cannot but be extremely glad your majesty has taken those resolutions you have, concerning the Straits fleet. I confess there is some hazard in it; but if it succeed, it will be of great advantage. There has been a meeting this evening about changing the management of the victualling into a contract, but no resolution yet taken, and the victuallers are to be discoursed with to-morrow morning, to know what money they will expect for the carrying on this unforeseen service.

"I have had another letter from the person that formerly gave notice, that a project of a separate peace was carrying on in the court of Spain, which confirms his former advice; but I suppose Mr. Russell will be a sufficient agent to prevent such a proceeding this year."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[The queen and council have modified admiral Russell's instructions, so as to permit his return in case of absolute necessity.]

"*Whitehall, Aug.* 14-24, 1694.—Sir; The lords of the committee have this morning finished a draught of instructions to Mr. Russell, to be laid before her majesty, for her, if she thinks fit, to approve and sign; which, if they do not exactly agree with your majesty's orders to him, the lords are in hopes do not at least differ from your intentions, since they observe in Mr. Blaithwayt's letter to Mr. Secretary, your majesty did give your positive orders to Mr. Russell to winter in the Straits, only because you feared such a latitude as was proposed, would leave him under doubts and uncertainties too great, for any one man to resolve in so important a case, apprehending possibly, at the same time, that an inclination to return home, might have some influence upon his resolutions, left at such a liberty; but that your majesty supposed, upon any

extraordinary accident or necessity, Mr. Russell would, notwithstanding those orders, return. If, upon examining the extent and force of this order, with all the nicety and consideration I am capable of, I could have been of the same opinion, I should never have given my assent to advise the queen in the least to have enlarged or explained what your majesty had signed; but being convinced, that it is penned with such strictness, that the admiral must answer with his head his disobedience in returning, even though the fleet and nation were endangered by his stay, I could not resist joining with the rest of my lords, in endeavouring to pen such instructions to Mr. Russell, as we conceived would oblige him, in all ordinary cases, to winter at Cadiz; but in extraordinary difficulties, which are possible to arise from the enemy, but more likely from the weather, or the ill condition of the ships, then to give him such a liberty, as necessity only can justify making use of.

"The victuallers have been several times before the lords of the committee, and seem ready in their business, and so reasonable in their demands, for this new service, that every body almost agrees, it would not be advisable in this nice conjuncture, to change hands. If a contract were to be made with the new undertakers, it must now soon be finished and signed, though not to begin till the new year; and your majesty's fleet, that must be victualled at Cadiz, just as if they were at sea, must be provided, till that time, by persons, who will know, that at the end of that service, they are to be discharged."

REPLY OF THE KING.

[Thinks the queen's instructions to admiral Russell too vague—Hopes the duke of Shrewsbury has urged his continuance in a private letter.]

"*Camp of Waninghem, Aug.* 30, 1694.—I received by the two last posts your letters of the 10-20th and 14-24th. I am glad that you approve the resolution which I adopted, that admiral Russell should remain with his fleet in the Mediterranean, and winter at Cadiz; but I very much fear, that the last orders which the queen sent him, leave him too much at liberty to return, if he

wishes it, as I doubt not that he does, and which is evident from the letter that he has written to the secretary. I trust, however, that the private letter you have written to him, will induce him not to follow his inclination; for wherever there is an unwillingness to do any thing, reasons against it are easily found, to prove that impossible, which is not so in effect. Therefore, if means can yet be devised to convince him of the importance of his continuance in the Mediterranean, it will be very necessary to do so. It appears to me, that it will be extremely difficult to change, at present, the *commission* of victualling; but as a considerable sum of money will be requisite, should the fleet winter in the Mediterranean, and as the treasury has no fund for that purpose, it perhaps might be eligible, in making the contract, to oblige the contractors to advance the said sum. For this reason, I am of opinion, that it will be necessary to lay this important business before the committee of the lords, to be again examined, unless some positive resolution on the subject should have been adopted before this reaches you."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Alludes to the rumours maliciously circulated, that the king, in regulating the East India company, was influenced by the Dutch, who were desirous to ruin it.]

"*Whitehall, Aug. 24-Sept.* 3, 1694.—Sir; Mr. Blaithwayt is informed of what I have acted in relation to your majesty's commands to the East India company,* and I have sent him a copy of their answer.

"As I think it to be my duty to acquaint your majesty with every thing that is or can be for your service, so I think it would be a breach of that duty, if I should conceal what is whispered by

* In the preceding year the East India company had forfeited their charter, by neglecting to pay the tax on joint stocks. A great effort was accordingly made, to supplant them by the mercantile interest, who had long regarded their privileges as an injurious monopoly. Several proposals and counter-proposals were at this period offered on both sides, and the observation of the secretary probably alludes to some indulgence which the king was disposed to grant to the old company.

some here, who have heard of this proposition, and industriously given out, that it arises from the suggestion of persons in Holland, who hope, by their means, to ruin this company, and would, before any other is set up, destroy the english trade, and possess themselves of it. It is impossible for any child to be more ignorant than I am, of what is advantageous for england to do, or not to do, upon this particular, having never had an opportunity to examine, or be informed of any thing that relates to it; but I hoped your majesty would excuse the freedom of my advertisement, and believe, that it proceeds from a true zeal for your interest, as becomes, Sir," &c. &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[The queen and council have given more positive orders to admiral Russell—Arrangements for forwarding his supplies—Suggests expedients for maintaining a proper fleet in the channel, to protect the coast from insult.]

"*Whitehall, August* 28-*Sept.* 7, 1694.—Sir; by the express Mr. Secretary sent last night, I have writ to Mr. Russell to the effect your majesty commanded in your's of the 20th.* I find the queen is doubtful, whether the last directions dispatched to Mr. Russell do come entirely up to your majesty's intentions, or whether they do not leave him too much room to return. This, by her majesty's special commands, was particularly considered by the committee, and they were unanimously of opinion, that nothing could be sent, unless the orders were penned so positive, as to leave him no latitude, in any case, to use his discretion. And Mr. Blaithwayt's letter again repeating your majesty's commands to be with that reserve, that it consist with the supply of the fleet, I am confident he will understand it so as not to come back, but upon such an extremity as your majesty would not wish the fleet should be exposed to.

Upon a representation from the lords of the admiralty, that the different convoys being furnished, which can be necessary to guard the supplies to be sent at several times to Mr. Russell, for instance,

* This alludes to the king's letter of the 30th.

two third-rates now under orders to go with the victualling ships immediately to Cadiz; a second convoy, with the stores designed, about a fortnight hence; a third, with more stores, about a month after that; and a fourth, with victuals necessary towards the spring: that these several convoys being furnished, there would then not one ship, except a first or second rate, be left to guard the coasts this winter, or the next summer. The lords of the committee did think fit to propose to her majesty, that an order should be sent to Mr. Russell to send home ten ships of the third rate, or upwards, concluding, that since he is strong enough now for the french fleet, this detachment would not lessen his force, considering the reinforcement he will necessarily receive upon the occasions I have before mentioned; and that without such a squadron were returned hither, we should not be in a condition to protect the coasts from any small insult, either of the french, or, what now possibly may be apprehended, from the danes.*

"This leads me to put your majesty in mind, that I hope you will, before your departure out of Holland, particularly recommend, that their fleet designed for the channel should be early ready; for without their assistance, we have not strength sufficient to defend ourselves against the fleet, the french may, in the spring, set out from Brest, Port Louis, and Rochfort; and your majesty having exceeded your quota in the number of ships you

* In this and other letters allusion is made to the dispute which had at this time arisen with the king of Denmark. The british government had insisted that all danish ships should strike their flags, or lower their topsails, not only to british fleets, squadrons, or men of war in our own seas, but even to single frigates in the seas of the north. This pretension being strenuously resisted, had led to unpleasant rencontres; and remonstrances and counter-remonstrances were offered on both sides, through the british ministers and agents, and Plessen, the danish envoy in England. The dispute was aggravated by the indulgence shewn to the vessels of the king of Sweden, whom the british government were desirous to conciliate, and was fomented by the insinuations of France. However, the manly and judicious proceeding of the court of Denmark, and the conciliating conduct of king William, who was too prudent to embroil the two nations for the sake of a humiliating ceremony, prevented a rupture; and the question seems to have been afterwards compromised, to the satisfaction of both parties.—Correspondence of the duke of Shrewsbury with sir Wm. Trumbull and Mr. Gregg, british consul at Copenhagen, in August and September, 1694.

have now in the Mediterranean, proportionable to what the states have there, unless it may be depended upon here, that that inequality will be made up, as it has been this summer, by their furnishing more ships for the channel, it will not only create a great clamour, but may dangerously expose these kingdoms, any disappointment of this kind being of the last importance.

"I suppose my lord Godolphin will have given your majesty an account, that the demands of the victuallers are so moderate, that there will be no occasion upon that account to change hands; and indeed, Sir, without an absolute necessity, even those that are partial against them, think an alteration at this time too hazardous to be attempted."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Thanks him for his information—Justifies himself against the charge of listening to the dutch, in regard to the East India company—Anxiety for the stay of admiral Russell in the Mediterranean.]

"*Camp of Rousselaer, Sept.* 9, 1694.—I received yesterday your letter of the 24th of August, O. S. What I ordered Blathwayt to write to you concerning the East India company, was done in conformity with the advice which I received from England; and I tell you in confidence, that it was suggested to me by my lord keeper; you may speak to him on the subject. Hence you will perceive the falsity of the report, that this advice was insinuated from Holland. I am well aware, that I am ever, though undeservedly, exposed to such calumnies. I am much obliged to you for having acquainted me with it, and I intreat you to continue informing me whatever you hear relative to the same subject.

"I am under great alarms lest admiral Russell should not receive my orders to continue in the Mediterranean; and the more I consider that affair, the more important it appears to me. I know, from the best authority, that there is nothing France so much dreads. It would therefore be expedient to risk sending some vessel to meet him, and order him to return, even should he be on this side Cadiz. If it be practicable, I desire that this may be carried into execution as soon as possible."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Farther difficulties about instructions to admiral Russell—His orders have been rendered more positive.]

"*Whitehall, Sept.* 7-17, 1694.—Sir; In obedience to your majesty's commands of the 9th, N. S., the committee have humbly advised her majesty, that an order to the effect of that I have inclosed to Mr. Blaithwayt, should be dispatched to Mr. Russell, with duplicates of her majesty's instructions to him, of the 14th of August, and her order of the 27th of the same month; and at the same time, the better to convince Mr. Russell of your majesty's mind, I should send him an extract of that part of your majesty's letter which relates to his stay; all which I have done.

"As to the first part of your majesty's letter, which was not proper to communicate, and relates to the East India company; I have not had a moment's leisure to discourse my lord keeper upon it. By the next post I will give your majesty a better account of that matter; and in the mean time, hope you will be satisfied with the orders which are sent to Mr. Russell. No one person of the committee did dare to advise, that he should be positively commanded to return, wherever he were met on this side Cadiz, since he might possibly be so far from that port, advanced in his way here, that it would be extremely hazardous for the fleet to return thither again this season.

"I am extremely glad the liberty I used in representing what was reported concerning your majesty's orders to the East India company, is not displeasing to you. I shall ever, with your leave, practise the same freedom, with that zeal and sincerity which becomes," &c.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Is pleased that admiral Russell has obeyed his instructions—Desires him to take measures with the admiralty for a fleet to protect the coasts—The dutch will furnish their quota.]

"*Dieren, Oct.* 12, 1694.—I rejoice much that admiral Russell has obeyed my orders with such promptitude. I am con-

cerned at his chagrin, but I hope that he will not find so many difficulties as he apprehends. He will not, I confess, pass his time very agreeably this winter at Cadiz, but I doubt not that in the spring he will be able to render essential service.

"It will be necessary to provide a good squadron this winter for the protection of our commerce and coast. On this subject you will please to speak very seriously to the admiralty, exhorting them to neglect no means, and to employ the most strenuous exertions to that effect. You may be confident, that the dutch will have at least twenty ships fitted out, and I will take care, before my departure for England, that the ships shall be in such readiness as to be able to put to sea early in the spring."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[On the means of collecting a fleet to protect the coast—Has gained no farther intelligence on the character of captain Sanderson, but deems it prudent that he should be removed.]

"*Whitehall, Oct.* 9-19, 1694.—Sir; I am very glad to find by your majesty's letter of the 12th of October, N. S. that so good a squadron will be prepared by the dutch, to be in a readiness this winter. By the inclosed paper, a copy of which I formerly sent to Mr. Blaithwayt, your majesty will see it is impossible the lords of the admiralty can provide a winter guard; but, in case of extremity, some of the forty-three men of war, appointed cruizers by act of parliament, may, undoubtedly, be made use of, to protect the coasts, as well as the trade, as the dutch will be stronger than any thing the french have to set out in these seas. So that unless Mr. Tourville get out of the Mediterranean and Mr. Russell cannot follow him, I think we shall be quiet here, and the great consideration will be, in what manner one may the most effectually annoy them in both seas the next spring; concerning which, I question not but your majesty has your thoughts.

"I have employed several people to know further concerning captain Sanderson; but all I can learn is, the Jacobites call him a very honest man; but I cannot discover that he has said or done any thing to deserve their good word. However, I confess I wish

he had a better employment, rather than this of constantly carrying your majesty over."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Presses the king to take proper precautions in his passage to England, against the enterprises of Du Bart.]

"*Whitehall, Oct.* 19-29, 1694.—Sir; Mr. Blaithwayt's last letter, which gives an account, that it is believed Du Bart is out, to watch any opportunity of advantage upon your majesty's crossing the seas, is the occasion of my giving you this trouble, though at the same time I conclude I know your humour so well, that you will think it very impertinent; but, however, I cannot resist begging of you, that if this report should be confirmed, you will not come in a yacht, but in a man of war rather. Besides what I have already hinted to your majesty, one cannot imagine what accidents night, mists, or storms, may occasion. I may perhaps be so much in the wrong, that a man of war may be less safe than a yacht; but I am sure your majesty owes it to the preservation, not only of England, but of Europe, to take all reasonable care of yourself. I am sensible this is a subject you will dislike my troubling you with, but I could not dispense with myself from doing it, and hope you will pardon, Sir," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Requests directions with regard to Mr. Russell's commission of captain general—Sends papers for signature.]

"*London, Dec.* 15-25, 1694.—Sir; For want of legs,* I am forced in this manner to lay the inclosed letter from Mr. Russell before your majesty, desiring that the letter itself may be returned to me, with your commands, what answer shall be made to it. I hope your majesty will not forget to give some immediate directions about the regiments you intend to send into the Mediterranean, and about Mr. Russell's commission, if you are come to a resolution in what manner it shall pass. The papers for your

* Having the gout.

majesty's hand, which come at the same time with this, are things that come either from the Treasury, or the Ordnance, or by order of council; and some of them requiring dispatch, and being only things of course, I hope your majesty will be pleased to sign them."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[On the transport of troops to the Mediterranean.]

"*London, Dec. 23-Jan. 2*, 1694.—Sir; I have here, inclosed, sent your majesty the answer of the lords of the admiralty, by which it will appear, that much assistance is not to be expected from this convoy, for transporting the troops. I have also inclosed the answer of the commissioners for transportation, who calculate the charge of as many men as your majesty shall think fit to send, at forty shillings a head, without victuals, and that the ships cannot be ready in much less than a month. I am sorry for the occasion which makes this a time so improper * to think of matters of this nature; but if it be resolved the men shall be sent, no time ought to be lost in giving orders for the preparations; and if they are not to go, the admiralty ought to be acquainted with it: because I doubt, depending upon this event, they intend to send Mr. Russell fewer men than otherwise they designed, which may prejudice the service."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Approves the recall of sir George Rooke from the Mediterranean—Recommends him to refer the matter to the cabinet council.]

"*Whitehall, Jan. 22*, 1695.—Sir; I am extreme glad to hear by my lord keeper, that your majesty designs immediately to recall sir George Rooke, and very sorry my head continues so ill, that I am not in a condition to wait upon you, to receive your commands upon it. I wish the orders may not be delayed beyond this very day; but yet hope they will not be dispatched without calling a cabinet council. Those lords will think themselves much

* He here alludes to the illness of the queen, who was attacked with the small pox, on the 23rd of December, and died on the 28th.

slighted, if, after having been consulted upon that matter all along, they should now be left out, in a point so very material; besides, at the same time these orders are sent, there are many other considerations, which no single person can recollect to lay before your majesty, so fully as the committee.

"My condition renders me so useless, and is so very painful to myself, that I beg leave to go into the country for two or three days, to try if air can give me any ease."

CHAPTER 5.

1695.

Effects of the death of queen Mary—Disposition of the parliament—Naval and military operations—Expedition of admiral Russell to the Mediterranean—Recall of the fleet in consequence of the threatened invasion—Farther considerations on Irish affairs—Administration of the lord deputy Capel—Correspondence from June to October, 1695.

AT this period of his administration, Shrewsbury was involved in many difficulties. The unfortunate death of queen Mary, which occurred on the 28th of December, 1694, gave scope to numerous cabals among the disaffected, and even several partisans of the Revolution considered the title of the king as essentially weakened by her decease. An objection was indeed suggested, that as the parliament had been convoked in the joint names of the king and queen, it was virtually dissolved by her death; but this objection was fortunately overruled, though it left a considerable impression on the public mind. On this event, the disputes which had long subsisted between the princess Anne and king William, were apparently reconciled, through the agency of lord Somers; but the accommodation was far from being cordial, and the party in opposition to the court, still continued to regard the interests of the princess, as opposed to those of the king, and to avail themselves of her countenance, in thwarting the measures of government.

The parliament, also, being constituted of a majority of tories, was frequently ranged in opposition to the sovereign; and they so far contravened their own principles, as to exert their chief strength in the abridgment of the prerogative. They entered into a vexatious investigation of the numerous abuses, which existed in the military and naval system, and the administration of the revenue, less from motives of public spirit, than from a personal

aversion to the king. By prudence and forbearance, however, this factious spirit was soothed or baffled; and the supplies being voted, the king prorogued the parliament, appointed a commission of lords justices, of whom the duke of Shrewsbury was one; and hastened his departure for the continent, with the expectation of giving new strength to his government, by his military successes.

The correspondence of 1695 exhibits nearly the same features as that of the preceding year. More frequent references, however, to military affairs, occur in the letters of the king, particularly to the siege and capture of Namur, which was one of his most brilliant exploits; but they are introduced with that brevity and simplicity which mark the warrior, and which peculiarly distinguished the character of our great Deliverer.

Naval affairs, at the same time, form a prominent topic; and in addition to the attacks on St. Maloes, and other points of the french coast, the attention of the king is particularly directed to the fleet in the Mediterranean, under the command of admiral Russell. On this enterprise, which may be regarded as peculiarly his own, he manifests unabated anxiety. When unwillingly compelled to permit the return of Russell, he sent sir George Rooke to supply his place; and laboured to maintain the mastery of the Mediterranean, till the invasion that threatened the british shores obliged him to abandon his grand design, and suffer the french to regain that superiority, which enabled them to break the confederacy in Italy.

The affairs of Ireland also, had acquired such interest as to occupy his serious attention.

In the preceding chapter we have rapidly sketched the different changes which occurred in that government; and traced the principle of weakness, which prevailed under all the forms of administration. As before, it was soon found necessary to recall the commission, of which lord Capel was the head; and instead of a government composed of jarring elements, to place the supreme power in the hands of a single person, possessed of the requisite sagacity, abilities, and vigour. The matured talents of lord Capel

recommended him to this office; and in pursuance of his suggestions, such changes were made in the Irish administration, as were deemed requisite to further the views of the english crown. The new lord deputy did not belie the confidence reposed in him. He risked the critical experiment of convoking the parliament, and succeeded in fulfilling all the instructions which he had received from the king. He established the english and protestant ascendancy, by procuring the confirmation of the Act of Settlement, by annulling the bills of attainder passed in the pretended parliament of James, preventing the prevalent system of foreign education, disarming papists, and settling the estates of persons dying intestate. He likewise eradicated a great cause of religious animosity, by procuring the abolition of the horrid writs for burning heretics. Lastly, he had even the address to obtain the grant of a subsidy of 160,000 pounds.

He was not, however, totally exempt from the evils attached to divided rule; for sir Charles Porter, who still retained the seals of lord chancellor, indirectly thwarted all his measures, and proved a zealous and active opponent of the government he served. An attempt was indeed made by the partisans of the lord deputy, to impeach the chancellor, for sowing discord among his fellow-subjects; but the effort was parried by the strength of the party, with which he was connected; and the weakness of the crown is manifested in the inability of William to remove so obnoxious and refractory a servant.

The address of the Irish commons, however, sufficiently characterizes the administration of lord Capel: "And we must ever acknowledge to your majesty, the great benefit we do, and our posterity shall receive, by those inestimable laws given us by your majesty, in this session of parliament, held under your majesty's deputy and our excellent governor, lord Capel, whereby, not only our religious and legal rights are confirmed to us, but this your majesty's kingdom of Ireland is firmly secured to the imperial crown of England."

The remaining part of the correspondence is chiefly occupied with the arrangements for the election of a new parliament. The

power and influence of the tories in the House of Commons, had induced the king to retain many of that party in the offices of state; but he continued to feel the necessity of a more intimate connection with the whigs; and at the suggestion of Shrewsbury, he adopted the resolution of profiting by the popularity derived from his military successes, to make an appeal to public opinion, by the convocation of a new parliament. He thus hoped to throw additional power into the hands of the whigs, on whose support he chiefly relied, and to check that spirit of factious inquiry, which the House of Commons had recently manifested. He was indeed so anxious to try the effect of this experiment, that even before his departure from Holland, he dispatched full powers to the lords justices, to dissolve the parliament in his absence, lest he should be detained too long abroad; but he was dissuaded from this resolution, and by the advice of his minister, suspended the design till his arrival in England.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Anxious that admiral Russell should remain till autumn in the Mediterranean.]

"*Loo, May 23-June 2*, 1695.—I have not received any letters from England since my departure, doubtless on account of the contrary wind. Before this reaches you, you will receive from sir George Rooke, an account relative to the stations of our squadrons, and how they are to act this campaign. I also trust in your exertions to press the execution of the plan, with as much order and promptitude as possible; and it will be, above all, particularly necessary to send specific orders for preventing the return of admiral Russell from the Mediterranean, before the end of September or the beginning of October; and should there be a few ships not fit to keep the sea, for so long a time, they may be dispatched homeward, and replaced by others from England, as I have settled with sir George Rooke. I shall depart from hence the day after tomorrow, and join the army Monday evening, near Deynse. I shall see what can be undertaken, and will give you due information."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[On the inexpediency of detaining the squadron too long in the Mediterranean—Opinion of sir George Rooke on the subject—Arrangements for opening the parliament in Ireland.]

"*London, May* 31-*June* 10, 1695.—Sir; I had not the honour of your majesty's letter of the 23rd, till the 29th of this month, that I returned out of the country, where I had been for four or five days, upon extraordinary occasions of my own; and finding your majesty's orders were, that Mr. Russell should remain in the Mediterranean till the end of September, or the middle of October; and that you thought a few only of that squadron, which are designed to be here before the winter, must necessarily return by the end of August, but that the greatest part might stay till towards October, I used the best means I could, to inform myself, from the most understanding here, and particularly from sir George Rooke, what the consequence might reasonably be, of great or weak ships returning so late in the season, being unwilling to depend entirely upon Mr. Russell's opinion, though declared in many letters, and particularly that of 16-26 of April, it being a thing in which his own desire of coming home might bias his judgment; but every body agrees, that it is even safer the ships should remain there another winter, and may better endure the worm (from which I doubt they have suffered too much already to make that advisable) than return hither so late in the season. Besides, sir George Rooke assured all the lords yesterday, that he expected so much time would be necessary to refit most of the ships expected from the Straits, that unless they were here before September, he doubted whether they could be put into a condition to go to sea early in the summer, and consequently the french might be stronger than we, the next year, in these seas; the consequence of which, is very obvious, as well as dangerous.

"I have received a letter from my lord Capel, who thinks all the removes your majesty has signed, necessary, he having demanded as few as were consistent with the service, and now he has good hopes of the success of the Irish parliament."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[State of the army—Intention to advance against the enemy—Surprised at the wish of admiral Russell to return in August.]

"*Camp at Ersele, June* 9, 1695.—I arrived here Monday, during the night, and in the morning was so much engaged, that I had no time to write to you yesterday, and to-day I reviewed the infantry, and found them all in good condition, except some english regiments, which are rather weak. I cannot, as yet, inform you what we intend to do; but I hope that we shall not be inactive. As the enemy are inferior to us in number, their movements must direct ours; and in a few days I shall see what can be done, as I am resolved to march the day after to-morrow.

"Blaithwayt will have informed you the last post, of my intentions respecting the letter from admiral Russell to you. I hope he will not hasten his return, so as not to receive the orders which are transmitted to him. I confess, his thought of returning in the months of July or August, excites my astonishment, as it may be attended with the most fatal consequences."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Is anxious for the king's personal safety—Reflections on the attack against Dunkirk—Danger of detaining the fleet too late in the Mediterranean.]

"*Whitehall, June*, 4-14, 1695.—Sir; I am almost sorry that your majesty should be satisfied with the condition of the army, if it will encourage you to undertakings that every body must tremble at the apprehension of, that is so fortunate as to know you, and the consequence of the safety of your person. But on this subject I write so like a woman, that I ought not to expect to be regarded.

"Your majesty will perceive by Mr. Vernon's letter to Mr. Blaithwayt, what the opinion is of our english sea-officers as to the attempt upon Dunkirk. If that service be performed, it must be by Mr. Allemonde, or somebody whose judgment goes along with it. I do not see why the dutch might not do it with their ships separate from our fleet, and assisted by Mr. Meester's

machines, and such other vessels as he has purposely prepared here; but this must be by your majesty's immediate direction.

"If there be any service designed for Mr. Russell, to be performed later than he proposes to come back, as I imagine your majesty has some scheme of, by your earnestness for his stay till towards October; I doubt it will fall out so unluckily, that it can very hardly be complied with, unless it may be performed with the twenty ships he proposes shall stay there all the winter; and my reasons are, that I suppose all those ships he thinks too weak to remain there the next season, will consequently be much more too weak to be ventured home so late as your majesty proposes; for he lays it down as a rule, that it is safer for them to stay another season, than to be sent home so late in the year. Another reason is, that if we are to send ships from hence to relieve that squadron, about the beginning of August, as I doubt it will be necessary for their safety, and to avoid their being disabled by ill weather, and put out of a condition to serve there all that time till November, when the others may be expected home, you are at the mercy of the french, who have between 30 and 40 good ships at Brest and Rochfort, which, by calling in their privateers, they may soon put out, and be masters of the sea, to land, and do what other spoil they please upon the coast.

"Your majesty will be informed that sir Giles Ayres, a judge in the King's-bench, is lately dead; but I hope you will not hastily engage yourself in any promise for the filling his place."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Has reconnoitred the french lines—Is determined to make some attempt against the enemy—dissatisfied with the conduct of admiral Berkeley—Overrules the objections of admiral Russell to remain in the Mediterranean.]

"*Camp of Besselaer, June* 8-18, 1695.—I have been three days at this place, which is a village three leagues and a half from the lines, between Comines and Ypres. Soon after my arrival, which was late in the evening, after a long march over bad roads, I went to reconnoitre the line. As all the infantry cannot arrive this evening, and the heavy artillery till very late, I could not

then attack them, though I was well aware that on the morrow I should find them much strengthened; and so it proved; for on reconnoitring early the next morning, when the roads were preparing, I found the army of Villeroy arriving, and did not deem it prudent to make the attack on that day. But I have ordered the elector of Bavaria to advance between the Scheld and the Lys towards the new lines; and I yesterday sent the duke of Wirtemberg to invest Fort Knock, with a corps of troops posted near Dixmund; so I hope that on one side or other we shall succeed, or at least that we shall undertake some considerable enterprise.

"I have to-day received your letter of June the 4th, and I perceive that the attempt on Dunkirk must be made by admiral Allemonde,* for which I will issue the necessary orders; but, at the same time, he must be assisted from England in what he requires. To confess the truth, I own to you that I am not satisfied with lord Berkeley's letter,† since he seems only to raise difficulties; for although I am no seaman, I flatter myself I know what is right to be done in that department. Neither have I changed my opinion respecting the continuance of admiral Russell in the Mediterranean till September. And I am convinced that there will not be so much danger as he apprehends, in sending home the ships at the end of that month, or the beginning of October; especially since it is common for the dutch and french, and even our own ships, to return in that season from Spain and the Mediterranean; for should our fleet not continue there till September or October, the enemy will doubtless profit by our absence, either by dispatching their squadron from Toulon to Brest, or by making an attempt on the coast of Spain; so that our whole campaign in those seas will have proved useless, and even prejudicial. I do not, I confess, much dread the armaments which the enemy are preparing at Brest and Rochfort, particularly if

---

* The dutch admiral.

† Lord Berkeley this year commanded the fleet in the channel, and made some attempts on the northern ports of France.

we do not send too early the ships destined to relieve those which are to return from the Mediterranean."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Sends a general representation from the council for withdrawing a part of the fleet from the Mediterranean—Wishes to resign the lord-lieutenancy of Wales and Hereford, and recommends either lord Carberry or lord Macclesfield to succeed him.]

"*London, June* 21-*July* 1, 1695.—Sir; I take the liberty to trouble your majesty with this, a little to explain what you will receive by the same post from us all.

"Ever since we received your majesty's last instructions, and in obedience to them, ordered Mr. Russell not to return till September or October, several of us have more exactly informed ourselves of the danger of such a voyage; and not one, but every seaman that any of us have discoursed with, do not only say, the hazard is very great, but almost certain; that ships of the first or second rate have not, till very lately, been ventured to those seas; and if they are to return in the winter, sir George Rooke's expression to me was, "It is a thousand to one several of them miscarry." This concurrence of all persons here, skilful in sea affairs, has frightened us into the representations we have made to-day. If I may presume to guess at your majesty's reasons for keeping the fleet so long there, before you send any of it home, it is either to protect the spanish coasts, or to make some attempt, with the assistance of landmen, upon the french, towards the end of the summer, and to remain master of those seas, that the french may not have an opportunity to send home their ships from Toulon to Brest.

"If this secret can be kept, and Mr. Russell have orders to come away with the ships at the time he proposes, leaving the twenty english and the squadron of the dutch, I think nothing is more certain than that the french will not be able to fit out a fleet superior to that left, between the time they will have notice of Mr. Russell's being gone with the great or weak ships, and the time they may be reinforced from home with such as are designed to be sent thither. The latter end of July was the time your

majesty was pleased to direct the stores and victuals to be ready to go to the Straits; and though possibly all the ships designed for that service cannot well be spared so soon, because, when they are gone, we have not one ship, besides cruizers appointed by parliament, to carry the name of a fleet in the channel; yet, if it appear, by our intelligence, that no preparations are making by the french in the Ocean, I do not see why the two first and two second rates, with some less ships, may not be sent with the provisions; and at the same time, the officer your majesty designs to command in chief in the Straits; and what other third rates cannot then be spared from my lord Berkeley, may follow as soon as that service is over. I persuade myself your majesty will excuse my offering my notions in a matter of this difficulty, because I hope you will always think they are sincerely intended for your service.

"I must also take the liberty, Sir, to lay before you another matter, which lies extreme heavy upon me—the lieutenancy of Hereford and North Wales, especially South Wales: they are countries where I know nobody, and am known to none. The gentlemen make a clamour that commissions are not given out for the militia and array; at the same time some refuse to serve, and others I am fearful of employing, as not being secure of their truth to your majesty's interest. If this honour and burthen might be conferred upon my lord Macclesfield, or some other who has leisure and opportunities to be acquainted with the gentlemen, it would be a service to your majesty, and a great ease to me. You were pleased once to give leave my lord Carberry should have it, which was then declined, in consideration of my lord Macclesfield. I do not know my lord Carberry's mind, he having been absent in the country for near a twelve-month; but if your majesty should not be disposed to give it my lord Macclesfield, I could soon know my lord Carberry's thoughts; and if he undertake it, he will serve you faithfully and well.

"Upon the first subject I beg leave to add these few words, that I doubt, if the orders to Mr. Russell are not altered, he will either send home all but the twenty ships, as he first proposed,

and justify himself upon the opinion, that not one of them could return later in the year with safety, in which case we shall not be prepared to reinforce that fleet so soon as we should be, if we expected their return at that time; or else he will punctually observe orders, and keep most of them, till they are so out of condition, and the season so far advanced, that he will not dare to send them home, but lay them up another winter at Cadiz; and then most of them will be so weak and worm-eaten, that the refitting which can be given them in that port, I am told, will not make them serviceable next summer here, nor there. The inclosed is from the queen dowager.* Your majesty will pardon this tedious letter."

"P. S.—Since the writing this long letter, sir Thomas Littleton has read the inclosed to me, and desired me to present it to your majesty. The manner of his service in the House of Commons does more directly entitle him to ask a place in the Treasury than any other man that I know; and I believe no person your majesty can put there, will be more generally approved; but, however, I submit it to your majesty."†

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Cannot force the enemy's lines—Will undertake the siege of Namur.]

"*Camp at Besselaer, June* 17-27, 1695.—I have only time to inform you, that the enemy have united all their forces here in Flanders, and so strongly entrenched themselves, that I have not found any opportunity of undertaking any considerable operation. I have, therefore, formed the design of besieging Namur, and have made all the necessary measures for that siege. It is, I avow, a very great undertaking; God grant that it may succeed. I could not do otherwise, for many reasons, which I have not time to explain to you."

* Katherine, infanta of Portugal, widow of king Charles the Second.

† In consequence of this recommendation, sir Thomas Littleton was appointed a commissioner of the Treasury, May 2, 1696.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Investment of Namur—Farther remarks on the continuance of the fleet in the Mediterranean.]

"*Camp before Namur, July* 1-11, 1695.—Since my last, we have been employed in strengthening our lines, and in making the necessary preparations for our attacks. This night we purpose to open the trenches at the gate of St. Nicholas. Our heavy artillery will arrive only to-day, which has retarded the siege two days. Till the present moment the enemy have made no appearance of intending to succour the place; but they will have sufficient time, and therefore we cannot form any accurate judgment on the subject.

"You will see what I ordered Blaithwayt to write by the last post to my lords justices. I do not perceive any difference between the orders which have been sent to admiral Russell, and those which they are of opinion ought to be sent.

"I am willing that you should sound lord Carberry respecting the lord-lieutenancy of Wales, which you now hold; and that you order his commission to be expedited."

THE EARL OF PORTLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Progress of the attack on Namur.]

"*Camp before Namur, July* 14, 1695.—I send you herewith the copies of some letters in cipher, from the king of France to marshal Boufflers at Namur, which fell into our hands. I beg you to have them deciphered by Dr. Wallis, and send them back as soon as possible.

"Our siege advances against the town. We spare our people as much as we can, so that we have not lost more than three men each night, during the three nights that the trenches have been opened. Our breaching batteries of heavy cannon and our mortars, will open to-morrow. We expect every moment the news of a battle in Flanders, since our intelligence last night was, that marshal Villeroy was marching directly to our army, to

engage it, and his vanguard was only half a league distant. God give us success."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Successful attack of the outworks of Namur—Farther operations of the siege.]

"*Camp before Namur, July* 11-21, 1695.—I have been so much engaged since my last letter, that I was not able to write to you; but I know that you have been informed of all our proceedings. Two days ago, I was obliged to attack the lines, which the enemy had constructed to cover their works; and we forced them with vigour. All the troops displayed considerable courage, and particularly the five battalions of guards, the three english, the scotch, and one dutch, who attacked on the right, and also the dutch troops who attacked on the left. We have lost a great number, but the enemy more in proportion. We are at present employed in forming the breaching batteries, and I hope that we shall soon be masters of the town. The siege of the citadel will be attended with more difficulty, and will take up more time; but if we once obtain possession of the town, no more succours can be thrown in. By the last post you were informed of what was passing in Flanders; to-day I received intelligence that the enemy intend to attack Dixmund. I hope that the garrison will vigorously defend themselves, as they amount to no less than eight battalions.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Anxious for the king's safety and success—His majesty's wishes fulfilled in the instructions to admiral Russell—On the transfer of the lord lieutenancy of the welsh counties.]

"*July* 12-22, 1695.—Sir; I cannot acknowledge the honour of your majesty's letter of the first of July, without expressing, at the same time, my continual fears for your success and safety in this great design. I hope the event will be glorious and fortunate to your majesty.

"I believe the last orders we have sent to Mr. Russell are agreeable to your majesty's intentions. I wish he may be able to do any service considerable in those parts before his return.

Could it have been foreseen, that those troops he has transported to Catalonia might have been spared for a time from thence, as the spaniards' success in those parts inclines one now to believe they might, it is possible, in conjunction with what he could have added, they might have been employed to some useful purpose; but this thought is now too late.

"As soon as my lord Carberry comes to town, who is daily expected, if his inclinations be the same they were formerly, to desire those Welsh counties, I will so order it, that he shall esteem himself obliged for the trust your majesty reposes in him. If I find him decline it, he shall not know your gracious intention towards him, but I will fill up the lieutenancy and militia in the best manner I can, and ever acknowledge your majesty's willingness to ease me of this burthen, as one obligation added to so many, that I were most ungrateful, if my life should not, every minute, be ventured, as a testimony of the real affection and fidelity of," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Hopes of the french to relieve Namur—Is surprised at the surrender of Casale to the duke of Savoy—On the appointment of lord Bellamont as governor of New York.*]

"Sir; I am extremely glad your majesty's troops have behaved themselves to your satisfaction, and that the town is soon likely to be reduced. The castle, I doubt, will be of greater difficulty; and the Paris letters tell us, the hopes they have of relieving the place is, not by force, but by killing so many men, if you press on the siege fast, that you will destroy your army; or if you proceed with more caution and security, so to distress you for want of forage, and all sorts of provisions, that the siege must be raised. But these considerations are too plain not to have fallen within your majesty's foresight; and therefore I hope the success will answer your expectation and my wishes, which shall ever be for the increase of your majesty's glory and happiness.

* Without a date, but written July 16-26, 1695, as appears from the reply of the king, dated August 1.

"I cannot help expressing my jealousy of this friendly agreement at Casale. It looks like such a correspondence as might create a treaty of more consequence to the common cause, unless your majesty's advice and consent have been first had.

"By this post your majesty will receive a representation from us, concerning my lord Bellamont. I believe, Sir, you are satisfied the providing for that poor gentleman will be for your service. The committee of plantations have advised, and I believe with good reason, that no salary can be depended on from New England; so that he must either have his subsistence out of your majesty's exchequer, which is an ill precedent, and never to be retrieved, or the expedient we have projected must take, which has no other hardship or difficulty, than the removing colonel Fletcher, who has been there four years, and by many much disliked. But knowing nothing myself of his merit, I shall not speak of that, nor had I troubled your majesty with thus much, but that Mr. Blaithwayt, I know, is a particular friend to colonel Fletcher; and therefore, in his discourse to your majesty, upon this subject, you may be pleased to suspect him of some partiality, which perhaps is no fault towards a friend."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Is glad to hear of the successful bombardment of St. Maloes—Anxious for the result of the attempt on Dunkirk—Progress of the siege of Namur.]

"*Camp before Namur, July* 28, 1695.—I yesterday received your letter of the 12-22.* I was glad to hear, that the bombardment of St. Maloes had been successful; and though it were to be wished, that it was more complete, yet we have sufficient reason to be satisfied. I hope also, that the attempt on Dunkirk, will likewise succeed. It is, however, necessary to forward the expedition, and to be very positive in the orders which you dispatch on this occasion.

"Affairs here go on tolerably well, though not as expeditiously as I could wish. Yesterday we made our lodgment on the counterscarpe, and I now flatter myself that we shall soon be masters of the town. I cannot sufficiently applaud the firmness

and valour of the troops. It is very grievous to lose so many brave men, but it cannot be avoided in a siege like this."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Lord Galway requests that the fleet might remain another year in the Mediterranean.]

"*Whitehall, July* 23-*Aug.* 2, 1695.—Sir; By the last post I received a letter from my lord Galway,* extremely pressing that the fleet in the Mediterranean might continue there another year, and that something, he believed, might be proposed to be undertaken, early the next Spring, particularly advantageous to England. He said he had taken the liberty to write to your majesty, and he hoped he should receive your orders; because, if it were resolved they should remain, he would engage the duke of Savoy and the ma† to get the spaniards to request it of your majesty, and dispose them to afford any accommodation to the fleet, in consideration of the benefit they receive by their stay, that your majesty should think reasonable. I have made him no other answer, than that I would put your majesty in mind to send him your orders for his conduct, without explaining whether the fleet be designed to be recalled or no. If it were possible, that any number of the duke of Savoy's troops, being now disengaged from the business of Casale,‡ could be brought time enough to attempt any thing this summer, with the assistance of your majesty's fleet, that might be, as my lord expresses it, more particularly for the advantage of England, it were very happy: but if the sudden unforeseen conclusion of the siege of Casale has not left matters so concerted, that there is no time for such an attempt this year, with great submission, Sir, I hope something will be thought on to be undertaken early the next spring."

---

* Commander of the auxiliary force in Piedmont.

† Word illegible; probably meant for the marquess of Leganes, the Spanish commander.

‡ For the account of the capitulation of Casale, see the correspondence with the earl of Galway, in part 2.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Is gratified by the progress of the siege, but alarmed at the success of the french against Dixmund—Wishes the king to return before the intended dissolution of parliament —Recommends means to be used for the election of sir John Houblon, as lord mayor of London.]

"*Whitehall, July* 26-*Aug.* 5, 1695.—Sir; With the honour of your majesty's letter of the 28-18, I am very glad to find the siege advances so well, and that the troops behave as they ought. The misfortune at Dixmund* is very great, and according to my small knowledge, gives me but a melancholy prospect of what the enemy may be able to act, whilst your majesty is employed before Namur.

"My lord Sunderland came to town two or three days since, and upon the discourse my lord keeper, he, and I, have had, they have empowered me, in their names, to represent chiefly two things; first, that taking it for granted your majesty continues in the same mind you were in, when we had the honour last to speak to you, that this parliament shall sit no more, but a new one be called against winter; we hope your majesty will be pleased to return to England as soon as your occasions will possibly permit; for though it is not to be questioned but the country will generally elect persons well-affected to the government, yet your majesty's presence, a little time before the election, and a few things it will be necessary for you to say to some, who, by the employments you gave them, have gained interests it would be very unreasonable they should employ against you and the public good, will make that matter much more secure and easy, than otherwise it would be, the consequence of which is too obvious to enlarge upon.

* While the king was employed in the siege of Namur, the french commander, Villeroy, endeavoured to effect a diversion, by attacking the line of fortresses which protected Flanders. After making a fruitless attempt on Newport, he attacked Dixmund, which was surrendered by the governor, general Ellemburg, almost without resistance. He then invested Deynse, which yielded without firing a shot; and traversing the Lys and the Scheldt, advanced towards Ninove, as if to effect the relief of Namur. We find, by the correspondence, that these hostile movements considerably embarrassed the king, but did not induce him to discontinue the siege.

"The second thing is, that the interest in the city being much broke by the imprudence of this present mayor, and some of the aldermen, and by the heat of many of the common council, in a dispute they have had depending two or three years, about permitting sheriffs nominated to fine off; it is extremely for your majesty's interest, that a person should succeed the present mayor, upon whose loyalty you may depend, and whose prudence and credit would be able to reconcile those animosities, which the weakness of this man has much contributed to increase. Sir John Houblon is the next in turn, and in all respects the fittest one could choose to act this part; but it is to be apprehended, if he thinks his being mayor inconsistent with his being of the admiralty, he will use his credit to be past by, and not be willing, for the honour of one year, to lose a good constant employment. What we propose is, that your majesty would allow us to assure him, that you think his being mayor of such consequence to your interest in the city, that without removing him from the admiralty-board, you shall readily excuse his attendance for that year, and think he does you better service being lord mayor of London, than he could do any where else. I shall mispend no more of your majesty's time, but assure you that I am," &c.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Is not apprehensive of any secret understanding between France and the duke of Savoy—Hopes the french will not succeed in relieving Namur—Greatly chagrined by the dastardly surrender of Dixmund and Deynse.]

"*August* 1.—I received, the day before yesterday, your letter of the 16-26 of July. I do not think that we have reason to fear any arrangements between France and the duke of Savoy; and I am of opinion, that he has acted right in accepting the capitulation of Casale,* without any previous negotiation. The weakness of France

* Casale was surrendered, under a secret understanding with France, on the 11th of July, by the french commandant, Monsieur de Crenan, on the conditions, that the fortifications should be demolished, and the town restored to the duke of Mantua.—See the account of the campaign in Savoy, and the conduct of the duke, in the part containing the correspondence of lord Galway.

is evident, from her incapacity in succouring that place, which would have been very easy.

"I hope, also, that she will be equally incapable of succouring Namur; and when we are once masters of the town, that will be no longer practicable; but till it is taken, we have reason to be alarmed, particularly after the dastardly defence of Dixmund and Deynse. Dixmund surrendered after thirty-six hours open trenches, fired upon by only six pieces of cannon, and three mortars; while the french themselves did not expect to be masters of the place under six or eight days; and what is still more infamous, the troops surrendered themselves prisoners of war. I suspect there must be something more than cowardice in this business, and I shall soon know the truth, from the inquiries that I have ordered to be made. As to the troops of Deynse, they would not fire a shot. You may easily conceive my mortification, not at the loss of these two trifling posts, on which I had calculated, but for the dastardly and precipitate manner in which they surrendered; and their not having employed the enemy so long as they ought to have done.

"In four or five days I hope we shall be in a situation to make a general assault, if they will not capitulate, at least for the town."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Capitulation of Namur.]

"*Camp before Namur, August* 4, 1695.—Although you will doubtless have heard of the surrender of Namur, before you receive this letter, yet I would not omit informing you myself, that we obtained possession of this place this afternoon. Blaithwayt forwards to you the capitulation. The day after to-morrow we shall open the trenches before the citadel, and I hope that God will also bless this enterprise, and that we shall soon be masters of it."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Is much pleased at the surrender of Namur—Hopes it is a prelude to that of the citadel—Gives proofs of the infidelity of the governor of Dixmund—Anxious for the king to return, and dissolve the parliament.]

"*Whitehall, July* 30-*Aug.* 9, 1695.—Sir; I am very glad to find, by your majesty's letter of the 1st of August, N. S., that my suspicions of the court of Savoy are groundless, and joyfully submit to your majesty's better judgment and information.

"The account of the surrender of Namur was extremely welcome, because I hope it will now be difficult for the enemy to relieve the castle. We wanted some such cheerful news to balance the sad disasters of Dixmund and Deynse. I doubt there is but too much cause to suspect treachery in the first. One hears nothing now but stories of that Ellenburgher's* corruption, cowardice, and disaffection to your service. Mr. Molesworth offered to shew me copies of letters he had writ my lord Nottingham, when this man was sent to Denmark to solicit recruits, where he represented that he did all he could to hinder what he was sent for, complaining of your majesty's service, and the usage the soldiers had, as such, that they ought not to be recruited. Having had some dispute with Ellenburgher upon this, and giving notice to the secretary of his ill-affection, and particularly that he was an enemy to the duke of Wirtemberg, the next news he heard was, that he was advanced to be a general officer. This I thought fit to acquaint your majesty with, though I doubt it comes too late to be of any use. Other stories there are of his being cudgelled in Ireland, and of his corruption for very mean sums; but these are reports I cannot answer for the truth of, neither did I ever hear any thing of him, till this misfortune happened.

"Out of my duty to your majesty, and my true zeal for your service, I cannot but wish that if success attends the attempt upon the castle of Namur, you would not too long delay your returning

* Commander of Dixmund.

home, but make use of the reputation that success will give your affairs, immediately to summon a new parliament. If the campaign should continue, with your majesty at the head of the army, for any time after that siege, great expectations would be raised; and if nothing considerable more should be done, the glory of the last action would be dead and forgot.

"If there be any instructions your majesty would particularly have given to sir George Rooke, I hope you will order Mr. Blaithwayt to give us directions in it immediately. The Paris letters mention fifty sail of men of war preparing at Toulon; if it proves true, I doubt it will be difficult for us to hinder their passing for these seas towards the end of autumn."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Leaves the siege to counteract the movements of the enemy against Brussels—Approves the plan for procuring the election of sir John Houblon as lord mayor.]

"*Camp of Waterloo, August* 11, 1695.—I arrived here yesterday, because the enemy were making towards Brussels, and I was uncertain, whether they would not leave it on the left, and advance towards Namur. In such circumstances I deemed it expedient to oppose them with the main army, where my presence was necessary. Yesterday they encamped near Halle; and to-day, after various movements, near Anderlecht. It appears not improbable that they may throw some bombs into Brussels, which we cannot prevent, although the whole army, under the prince of Vaudemont, is encamped in the vicinity of the town. To-morrow I intend to return to the siege of the castle of Namur, and we shall exert ourselves to the utmost to obtain possession.

"I have this day received your's of the 26th July, and you may rely, as much as possible, on my return to England. I am glad that you assured sir John Houblon from me, that he shall continue in the board of admiralty, even should he be elected lord mayor, and that I will this year excuse his attendance at the board."

THE EARL OF PORTLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Progress of the siege—Prospect of a battle.]

"*Camp before the citadel of Namur, Aug.* 15-25, 1695.—The king having slept little last night, and been on horseback the whole day, has ordered me to tell you, sir, that it is impossible for him to write this evening. Affairs here are at a great crisis. The siege of the citadel advances rapidly, the breach begins to be practicable, and I think a little time will render us masters of it, unless the enemy succour it by gaining a battle, since they approach us with a very numerous army. We will endeavour to render the enterprise as difficult as possible.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Sir John Houblon will be chosen lord mayor—Recommends the dissolution of the parliament.]

"*Whitehall, Aug.* 16-26, 1695.—Sir; By the delays of the post, I had not the honour of your majesty's of the first of this month, before the fourteenth. My lord keeper has spoke to sir John Houblon, and, as I understand, determined him to obey your majesty's commands, in being mayor. I hope, with his authority, and the assistance of a few others, we shall be able to compose the disorders of the city, which at present are many, and cause great heats and dissensions.

"It has been very industriously spread about, that a new parliament is not intended; by which your majesty's friends are discouraged from making their interest in the several places they have pretensions to be chose in; whilst others, worse affected, as warm as ever solicit their elections. This is an evil difficult for your majesty's servants to prevent, unless you would be pleased so far to explain your thoughts, that we might be enabled to give assurances to those that doubt.

"It is likewise hotly discoursed in the city, where a new parliament is much desired, as if the report of its not being intended this year, would produce petitions to that effect, which, if begun there, will probably be followed by several counties. All these in-

31131

conveniences would be prevented, if we were at liberty to give those assurances from your majesty, which it were to be wished we might do, if it be, as I hope it is, resolved that a new one be called. Your majesty will excuse this liberty, which, with my zealous wishes for your safety and interest, is all from," &c.

DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE EARL OF PORTLAND.

[Anxious for the result of an impending battle.]

"*Whitehall, Aug. 23-Sept. 2*, 1695.—My lord; It is so fit for me to expect that his majesty should take his greatest leisure to give me the honour of a letter (if he does it at all), that I am only ashamed he should give your lordship any trouble upon my account.

"The posture of your affairs is so critical, not only to you that are to be engaged in the immediate action, but to us and all Europe, whose liberty and beings depend on your success, that as we are not without our apprehensions, so our wishes and prayers are for your success and safety, and mine particularly for your lordship," &c. &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Recommends Mr. Molesworth for the post of a commissioner of the revenue in Ireland.]

"*Whitehall, Aug. 27-Sept. 6*, 1695.—Sir; Having received this morning by the post out of Ireland, an account that Mr. Sedgewick, a commissioner of the revenue there, is dead; I am encouraged, by my lord keeper's concurrence with me in opinion, humbly to lay before your majesty Mr. Molesworth, as a very proper person to supply that place. We are both fearful some ill impression may have been given your majesty of this gentleman; but taking the presumption to believe we have had opportunities of knowing his principles and merit, and his zeal for your person and government, better than those who have misrepresented him, we are willing to be answerable for his good behaviour in this employment, if your majesty shall please to confer it upon him. But submitting all to your majesty's better judgment, I remain," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Rejoices at the capture of the citadel of Namur*—Recommends him to return without delay, and summon a new parliament.]

"*Whitehall, Aug.* 30-*Sept.* 9, 1695.—Sir; You will receive so many congratulations upon the prosperous event of the siege of Namur, that I am sure your majesty will be tired with the very name; therefore I am not insensible or forgetful of the glory of the nation, but in respect to your majesty's temper, and my own duty to observe it, will be as silent to you, Sir, as you yourself will be to the rest of the world. But zealously wishing that your majesty's affairs may prosper every where, I presume to remind you of the advantage might now be taken in calling a new parliament; whilst here every heart is full of gratitude for the labours and dangers you have undergone, and every tongue contending, who most shall proclaim your praise. I know that in reality, two months hence, your majesty will not be less great, nor we less obliged; but whether the same warmth and zeal will then appear so universally as now, is with all humility submitted by your majesty's dutiful subject," &c.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Capture of the citadel of Namur—Authorizes him to announce the intended dissolution of parliament—Offended by a letter from admiral Russell.]

"*Camp of Boquette, Sept.* 6, N. S. 1695.—You doubtless rejoiced at the information of our success, by the capture of the castle of Namur. With all its circumstances, it is assuredly a great event, and we cannot sufficiently offer up our thanks to God for this success, from which we shall doubtless derive considerable advantages. You may readily believe, that I have been too much engaged to write to you. Your last letter was of the 16-26 of

* Namur was surrendered on the 2nd Sept. N. S., and the duke received the account just before he wrote this letter to the king, Aug. 30, or Sept. 9, N. S. A letter from the king, of Sept. 6, N. S., announcing the capture, was not received by the duke till Sept. 6, O. S., or 16, N. S., as we find by his of that date to the king. We have therefore placed this letter of the duke before that from the king, though the date is later.

August. Since my departure, I have never entertained any other thought, than to call a new parliament on my return: you may, therefore, boldly announce my resolution; and I trust that declaration will remove the unfavourable impressions which have been so maliciously circulated to my prejudice.

"Some time ago I received a letter for you from admiral Russell. I opened it, and find it so extraordinary, that I shall keep it till my return, and speak to you upon it. It passed through France, and I do not know whether he sent it that way that it might be opened and read; but even if that was not his intention, it was inconceivably imprudent."*

THE EARL OF PORTLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Congratulations on the reduction of Namur—Fatigues and exertions of the king.]

"*Camp of Boquette, near Namur, Sept. 6, 1695.*—Sir; Although I know that his majesty has written to you himself, and that Mr. Blaithwayt has acquainted you with all that has passed, I cannot avoid congratulating you, and rejoicing with you, on the capture of Namur, and the citadel, defended by 14,000 men, and that in sight of a hostile army of 100,000 men. This is so glorious a conquest, and at the same time so advantageous, that I think it has not been equalled for many years. It will greatly change the aspect of affairs, and put us in a condition to make either war or peace better, without suffering terms to be imposed on us, as France has hitherto done. The English have greatly signalized themselves in this siege, by their share in the vigorous actions which have occurred, in which they have been too much animated by the presence of the king himself. But, thank God, he is very well, and I hope this success will shorten the campaign, and that we shall have the happiness of seeing you sooner in England, than in former years,

* This harsh and disrespectful letter will be found in the correspondence of admiral Russell, dated July 31, 1695. It contains a vehement censure against the supposed partiality and subservience of the king to the dutch, and the ill-judged parsimony of the Republic, which could not fail of wounding the feelings and exciting the resentment of his royal master.

when the king may enjoy a little rest; for the fatigue he has suffered is incredible, as well as the care and trouble he has undergone, and has been able to support.

"P. S. His majesty has arrested marshal Boufflers till the king of France restores those of his subjects, who have been made prisoners at Dixmund and Deynse."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Is glad the king has resolved to call a new parliament—Apologizes for admiral Russell's offensive letter; and answers for his fidelity and zeal.]

"*Whitehall, Sept.* 6-16, 1695.—Sir; With the honour of your majesty's of the 6th, N. S., I am extremely glad to find you continue resolved to summon a new parliament, and I am confident the nation is disposed to elect persons well-affected to your interest and government.

"If Mr. Russell has writ any thing to give your majesty offence, I am heartily sorry for it, and dare answer he will be so too. I am sure your majesty will not impute his sending whatever he has writ through France, to any thing but inadvertence; and if there be expressions more warm, or free, than became him, you will charitably allow for his temper, and the time they were writ at, just upon receiving the first orders to stay, contrary to his own opinion, with regard to the safety of the fleet, as well as to his own inclination of returning hither, he seeming to think it necessary for his health. Besides, Sir, they were writ to one, whose friendship he is persuaded he may so entirely depend upon, that if any thing were expressed in his letter improper for him to say, it would be as secure from being made public, as if it still remained in his own breast; so that opening his mind to a friend, he reckoned no more than talking to himself; and I, who pretend to know Mr. Russell's heart as well as most men do, will venture to engage, that if your majesty saw it, and every secret thought in it, you would be sufficiently convinced of his zeal for your service and government, and of his respect and affection for your own person.

"Encouraged by some letters from beyond seas, we flatter our-

selves it will not be long before we shall have the happiness of seeing your majesty; concluding with these pleasing hopes, I shall trouble you no more than to repeat the assurance of my being," &c.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Has quitted the army—Inquires whether the lords justices can summon a new parliament before his return.]

"*Breda, Sept.* 16, 1695.—I quitted the army the day before yesterday, as the season was too far advanced to continue our operations, and as the enemy were not in a situation to undertake any thing. I have, however, left my equipage with the army, that I may return, if necessary. I shall go to-morrow to Loo, where I purpose remaining ten or twelve days, to enjoy a little relaxation after my late fatigues, and then I shall pass over to England without delay, as soon as the wind will permit, which I hope will not be so contrary as in former years. I know not whether the lords justices can convoke a new parliament before my return, as if they could, it would be so much time gained. On this subject I should be glad to know your opinion; and if it be advisable, I think the sooner it can be done, the better."

REPLY OF THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Is of opinion that the parliament should not be dissolved before the king's return—A squadron has been dispatched to cruize off Brest.]

"*Whitehall, Sept.* 13-23, 1695.—Sir; I received your majesty's letter of the 6-16 so late on Tuesday, that I had not time to gain the information necessary to answer your majesty's question about the justices calling a new parliament before your return; but since, I have thought of it as much as I am able myself, and proposed it to our own board, as well as discoursed it with others, and find there is little question made, but a parliament, so assembled and called, would be good in law, and not dissolved by your majesty's return. But such a doubt being raised, and much debated in town, it is the unanimous opinion of the lords here, that considering *that*, and that we are tied up, by our instructions, not

to dissolve the old parliament, or call a new one, without an express signification under your sign manual, which we cannot receive but by the letters which answer this, which will probably not be less than ten days, and may be a fortnight or more; so little time they think will be gained, that it will not be worth raising a scruple upon any thing of that consequence, we all hoping, that in very few days after, we shall have the happiness of seeing your majesty here; and that the least time possible may be lost, your majesty may be pleased to direct a proclamation to be prepared, which may be considered at a council you may please to call as soon as you arrive; and you may also order the writs to be got ready against your coming, and immediately issued, as soon as the proclamation is out.

"God knows whether we have done right in sending this squadron to cruize off Brest; but the clamour of so many poor people, almost ruined, was very hard to be withstood, especially when they alleged the ships were to lie useless in port, at a time they might very probably save the nation a million of money.

Having attended pretty assiduously hitherto, I have the lords' leave to go into the country for about ten days, in which time I hope nothing of your majesty's business, in my province, will be neglected."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Has sent full powers to the lords justices to dissolve the parliament, should he be detained abroad.]

"*Hague, Oct.* 8, 1695.—I arrived here last night; and as the yachts have been here since last Wednesday, I intend embarking by the first fair wind; but should I be detained for several weeks, as in the preceding years, which God forbid, I have thought it best to send full powers to the lords justices to dissolve the parliament, in case of necessity, and to call another. I have also given orders for the departure of sir George Rooke by the first fair wind, as you will see by Blaithwayt's letters: this is all I can tell you at present, hoping soon to have the pleasure of seeing you."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Anxious for his majesty's speedy arrival—Has executed his last orders with regard to the dissolution of parliament.]

"*Whitehall, Oct.* 1-11, 1695.—Sir; I hope the winds will be so favourable to your majesty's intentions of coming soon, that this letter will not find you on the other side of the water, for which, when the time is computed from the issuing the writs to the beginning on business in parliament, the season appears much advanced.

"Immediately upon the receipt of your majesty's letter of the 8th of October, N. S., which came to my hands late this evening, I caused letters to be writ to the lords justices in town, to desire them to meet extraordinarily to-morrow morning, to execute, with the least delay possible, the several commands you have sent by this express.

"I returned but two days since, from the country, and can give no exact account what late orders have been given to Hopton, who is now cruizing with part of sir George Rooke's squadron, to secure the East India ships expected; but to-morrow, when we meet, we shall endeavour to observe your majesty's commands in the best manner we can.

CHAPTER 6.

1696.

Character of the new parliament—Arrangements for the re-coinage of the silver—Depreciated state of public credit—Different expedients to raise supplies—Failure of the attempt to establish a land bank—Embarrassments of the king, from the want of means to carry on the war—Defection of the duke of Savoy—Division in the grand alliance—Necessity of peace—Correspondence from May to September, 1696.

IN conformity with the resolution expressed in the preceding correspondence, and the arrangements adopted before the departure of William from the continent, the parliament was dissolved by proclamation, and writs issued for the new elections immediately on his arrival. As the king and his advisers had foreseen, this appeal was attended with success. His military achievements excited the zeal of the nation; he was received and welcomed as a conqueror, and the people evinced their anxiety to maintain his government, by the choice of their representatives, a majority of whom were devoted to the whig cause, and the principles of the Revolution. The advantages of such a disposition in the House of Commons were deeply felt in the ensuing Spring.

The requisite supplies being granted for the prosecution of the war, the king took his departure from England on the 5th of May, and, repairing to the continent, renewed his intercourse with the minister.

The correspondence is considerably heightened in interest by its continual reference to those incidents and embarrassments which mark the year 1696. The prominent features which then occupied the attention of government, and which may be classed among the most important transactions in the pages of our history, were, the arrangements for remedying the dilapidated state of the national currency, and the depreciation of public credit.

These embarrassments, not only by their direct operation affected our domestic policy, but were the efficient causes which suspended the victorious career of William, and accelerated the conclusion of peace.

The evils arising from the dilapidated state of the coinage had been so long and deeply felt, that in the preceding year, an act had passed for an immediate re-coinage of the silver money, which was clipped, and otherwise much decreased in weight and value. The measures, however, which were adopted to accomplish so desirable a purpose, created a great, though temporary aggravation of the evil; for such a check to the circulation immediately ensued, that all the operations of trade were cramped, the collection of public supplies was suspended, guineas were raised to the value of 30 shillings, and paper currency was reduced to an alarming discount; bank notes falling 20, and tallies and other government securities 60 per cent. By these causes the army was deprived of its regular pay and supplies; and the letters of the king feelingly detail the mischievous consequences which ensued.

In such a crisis, numerous expedients were suggested to obviate the evil, which it is needless to detail. Among these, we cannot, however, omit the plan of a land bank, because it is frequently mentioned in the correspondence. At a period so fertile in projects as the present, this scheme was conceived by Dr. Hugh Chamberlain, in opposition to the bank of England, then recently founded, and struggling with the difficulties incident to a new establishment. The design was patronised by the tories, or landed interest, in opposition to the monied interest of the whigs; and the object was, to raise a subscription of 2,000,000*l.* for the service of government, on the condition of receiving an interest of 7 per cent, and the privilege of lending a certain sum yearly on landed securities. It was sanctioned by an act of parliament, in the preceding session, and considerable hopes were fostered by the ministry, of the advantages to be derived from this ephemeral supply; but when the 1st of August, the period fixed for the advance of the subscription, arrived, the projectors were unable

to fulfil their engagements; and the scheme utterly failed, to the disappointment of the hopes it had created. In fact, the government appears to have been left almost without resource; for at this juncture we find the minister, in a letter to admiral Russell, observing, "You have left us in the saddest condition that ever people were in: an army abroad, a fleet and army at home to maintain, and neither friends nor money to do it with."*

From the correspondence, some counter proposals appear to have been made by the bank of England, and by that company the sum of 200,000*l.* was at length advanced, which was barely sufficient for the immediate payment of the forces, till a new appeal could be made to the legislature. But nothing could effectually remedy the alarming fall of credit, and the deficiency of the revenue; and this failure of the sinews of war cramped all the operations of the campaign. The debilitated state of England discouraged many of the confederate powers, and the duke of Savoy, in particular, seceded from the grand alliance, by a treaty signed on the 29th of August. His defection spread such alarm and jealousy, that the fear of farther desertions induced the maritime powers to listen to proposals of peace, and their decision was publicly announced, by a resolution of the states on the 3rd of September, 1696.

William, disgusted with the inactivity of the campaign, quitted the army in the latter end of August, and repaired to Holland, to make arrangements for the commencement of the negotiations, which he could no longer suspend, and to give consistency to the military preparations, which were still deemed necessary for maintaining the interests of the alliance.

The contents of the ensuing letters impose on us also the necessity of resuming the consideration of Irish affairs. The brilliant and vigorous administration of lord Capel was now drawing to an untimely close, by a mortal indisposition, which carried him to the grave, at Dublin castle, on the 26th of May, 1696. The letters of the king and minister bear honourable testimony to his

* August 8, 1696.

eminent services; and if any eulogium of his vigour and impartiality were wanting, it might be found in the censures of the different parties, whose selfish and domineering views he equally opposed and defeated.*

The loss of his spirit and energy was manifested in the intrigues and divisions which preceded and followed his dissolution, and the want of vigour and harmony which marked the measures of his immediate successors. Feeling the rapid decay of his health, he was anxious to avert the return of the evils which he had repressed, and left a sealed commission for the appointment of viscount Blessington and brigadier Wooflesley, to direct the government during his illness, or in case of his death, till the royal pleasure should be known. On his decease his nomination was sanctioned by his adherents in the council; but the other party availed themselves of an old statute of Henry the eighth, to transfer the government to sir Charles Porter, his adversary. This successful machination foiled the views of the king; for when he sent a commission appointing a new Speaker to the lords, to replace sir Charles Porter, the house spontaneously voted an address of congratulation on his elevation to the post of lord justice. Against this strong expression of opinion, it was vain to wrestle, and no less unsafe to suffer the assembly to continue its deliberations. The parliament was therefore adjourned to the fourth of August, and the king, thus compelled to forego his design of confiding the reins of government to a single hand, had no other resource to balance the interest of the chancellor, than to associate with him the earl of Montreath; but he was obliged, at the same time, to join in the commission the earl of Drogheda, a friend and adherent of the chancellor.

* Kennet appears to be the only english historian, who treats of his administration with candour and impartiality; for he neither praises nor censures his conduct, but leaves his acts to speak for themselves. Burnett and Oldmixon, though whigs, severely arraign his rigour and severity; and are followed with still more acrimony by the tory historians Ralph and Smollett. The continuator of Rapin likewise accuses him of partiality to the english interest, and praises his two former associates, for their protection of the Irish, Vol. 14, p. 212.—For farther considerations on Irish affairs, see the correspondence with the whig lords, chapter 7.

The meeting of the Irish parliament was again deferred, by a new prorogation on the 4th of August; and while the english government was anxiously employed in devising means to avert the ill-effects of Porter's nomination, they were relieved from his opposition, by his sudden death, which occurred in the following December. That event facilitated a change. Lord Galway, the king's devoted adherent, was intrusted with the government *ad interim*, and afterwards associated in a commission with the marquis of Winchester and lord Villiers."*

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Indisposition of lord Capel, lord deputy of Ireland—Candidates for his post—Lord Wharton strongly recommended by his friends—Shrewsbury himself also proposed.]

"*Whitehall, May* 12-22, 1696.—Sir; Besides congratulating your majesty's happy arrival in Holland, I am obliged to give you this trouble, upon the account of my lord Capel's indisposition, which has occasioned some pretenders, and much discourse in the town. The duke of Norfolk has engaged me to mention his name to your majesty, and would take it as a particular mark of your favour, and endeavour to serve you in it to the best of his power; and conceives it would much contribute to the putting his affairs at ease, and he would apply himself most exactly, that your majesty might not suffer by his administration.

"Some of my lord Wharton's friends have mentioned him, with an assurance it is what he would cheerfully undertake. They say he would be extreme welcome to all my lord chancellor's† party, and his character here would recommend him to the other. Some in town have named my lord Lonsdale, late sir John Lowther, but I have no commission from him, or any of his friends, to mention him to your majesty. Others have named me, and told me they would write to that effect to your majesty, which obliges me to say, that it is a great honour, but what I shall neither

* These two last noblemen were afterwards re-appointed under new titles, the first having succeeded as duke of Bolton, and the second being created earl of Jersey.

† The late sir Charles Porter.

ambition, nor decline, but am willing to serve your majesty where you think I may be most useful. If I were to follow my own inclination, it would never lead me to business; but whilst I continue in it, I will submit myself to be disposed of as your majesty shall think most for your service. But I hope all these pretensions may be disappointed by my lord deputy's recovery. The last post brought me a letter from him of the fourth of this month, that gives great hopes of it. He had resolved to appoint my lord Blessington and colonel Woollesley justices, whilst he was unable to act; but whether they are in possession of that trust, or no, I cannot clearly understand by the letters, though I find some think them not altogether fit for it, as I suppose would have been said of any body else that had been nominated. I have nothing farther to trouble your majesty with, but the assurance that," &c.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the escape of the french fleet from Toulon—Apprehensions of the admirals from their superiority—Delays in assembling the army—The allies anticipated by the enemy in the field—Requests supplies of money.]

" *Hague, May* 12-22, 1696.—You have probably heard that I had a good passage. At present, the only news from France is, that it is not known what is become of the squadron of Chateau-regnaud. It is even reported, that orders have been sent for its return to the Mediterranean, if it was not too much advanced; so that there are some hopes that Rooke will meet with it. We have here been a little alarmed by a letter from admiral Allémonde, informing us, that the squadron which was on the point of sailing from Spithead, is not sufficiently strong to cope with Chateau-regnaud, if Nesmond has joined him. I confess, however, I am not of that opinion, if all the ships are there, a list of which you shewed me before my departure, and those that have convoyed me can also join them. All the men of war here, to the number of ten or twelve, have sailed within the last three days, two only excepted, which are soon to follow them.

" We have no news from Dunkirk.

" As I feared, so it has happened, the enemy has anticipated

us, by first taking the field, a most unfortunate circumstance, that may produce injurious consequences, and occasion our having a very unsuccessful campaign. The mareschal de Villeroy is encamped with his army between the Lys and the Scheldt, his left at Deynse; and the mareschal de Boufflers at Gosseliers, on this side of the Sambre, near Charleroi.

—"Our troops assemble as well as they can, but find it difficult to join, because the enemy are so far advanced, and in such great force.

"There are two reasons that have prevented our armies in Brabant and Flanders from forming sooner. The first, that the Brandenburg troops could not be persuaded to march; and those in Flanders are so much in want of money, that they can scarcely move; and if the Treasury do not find prompt means to furnish supplies, I know not how I can possibly act. You will so fully appreciate the importance of this business, that I am convinced you will use every exertion, that all that is possible may be quickly done.

"To-morrow I go to Loo, and from thence shall join the army, as soon as it can be assembled."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Movements of the french fleets—Complains of the neglect of the admiralty—Discouraging prospect of the campaign.]

"*Loo, May* 18-28, 1696.—According to all appearance, you will know by this time positively, whether the squadron of Chateau Regnaud has entered Brest. What, at least, is certain, is, that Jean du Bart quitted Dunkirk two days before it was known to our squadron, which is at Nieuport.

"This is a specimen of their vigilance, and you know how often I told the admiralty to issue orders for observing both the eastern and western channels, without which the squadron would be useless where it is, and unable to prevent the enemy's ships from getting out, which will incommode us during the summer, and be of great prejudice to our trade.

"I shall go from hence to the army at the end of the week, by

which time all our troops may be assembled; but I see little probability of undertaking any thing, as the enemy are stronger than we are."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[On the passage of the French fleet through the Straits, and the apprehensions of their strength—Depressed state of credit, and difficulty of raising supplies for the army—Recommendation of lord Coningsby as lord lieutenant of Hereford.]

"*Whitehall, May* 15-25, 1696.—Sir; What news we have had of the french fleet's having passed the Straits, and how little hopes remain that sir George Rooke will come time enough to intercept them, your majesty will have received by the last, and this post. The apprehension of the enemy's being so very strong, with which I perceive admiral Allemonde is also infected, as well as the first mistake of the orders left at Plymouth, has, I doubt, been fatal to that expedition, which, if undertaken in time, might have been of great advantage. Sir, I believe the french will prove to be neither so strong, nor so well manned, as was apprehended in our fleet.

"Upon the receipt of your majesty's commands this morning, I engaged the rest of the justices, to represent the case of the army abroad, to my lord Godolphin; but found your majesty's new letter to him had made him sufficiently sensible of their condition. We discoursed this morning with several of the most eminent goldsmiths, and with some of the bank, and had the dismallest accounts from them of the state of credit in this town, and of the effects it would soon have upon all the traders in money: none of them being able to propose a remedy, except letting the parliament sit in June, and enacting the clipt money to go again, the very hopes of which, locks up all the gold and good money, and would be to undo all that has been done. So that, for my part, it is past my understanding how we shall avoid infinite confusion; but I flatter myself, your majesty and this nation have not been preserved from so many imminent dangers, to be undone at last, by this accident; and my dependence for the present is upon fate, rather than upon reason.

"Ever since the death of my lord Macclesfield, nobody has been made Custos rotulorum of Hereford. I have more there already than I ought, and find my lord Coningsby, whose estate lies in that county, is desirous of it, which if your majesty consents to, I hope you will direct Mr. Blaithwayt to signify your pleasure accordingly.

"I have sent Mr. Blaithwayt a commission to appoint Mr. Boscawen governor of St. Mawe's, in the place of sir Joseph Redenham, as your majesty was pleased to direct, though it was not before your departure. I hope you will sign it, and that upon the whole matter, a good alteration will be made in that county against the next parliament."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Laments that the Toulon fleet has got safe into Brest—Regrets the escape of Jean Du Bart—Difficulty of finding supplies to encamp the troops.]

"*Whitehall, May* 22-*June* 1, 1696.—Sir; It is certain the Toulon fleet got into Brest at the time the french letters report; for one of your majesty's advice boats, sent on purpose, has seen their fleet riding there. It is certain, that a great opportunity has been lost, by not meeting with them. Du Bart has got out by the same ill-luck, or management, that the others have got in; and the dutch commander refusing to go along with Benbow, has completed that misfortune, which otherwise might possibly have been retrieved. Both these errors were foreseen by your majesty's great prudence, and yet, it seems, have not been prevented.

"The great scarcity of money makes it difficult to obey your majesty's commands, in encamping the troops; but at our next meeting we have ordered the commissioners of transports to attend, and all that is possible will be done, in order to their encampment, and afterwards to the embarking the ten battalions for the end your majesty directs.

"We have had no news from sir George Rooke since the 12th, nor from Ireland since the 14th, when my lord Capel was so ill, it was not expected he should live many hours."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the arrangements for procuring credit and supplies—Declines conferring the government of Ireland on the duke—Censures the mismanagement of the admiralty.]

"*Breda, June* 4, 1696.—I have your two letters of the 12th and 15th May to answer. You may easily suppose how painful it must be to me, to see that we are likely to be reduced to such an extremity, if we cannot, in some degree, remedy the evils into which we are falling by the loss of our credit; and when we plainly discover that we have been in error, the sooner we acknowledge it the better. I own I was strongly of opinion to reduce the value of the guineas to 22 shillings, but I now see, too late, that I was in the wrong, and there appears to be no remedy for obtaining credit, but the acceptance of guineas by the Treasury, at 24 or 25 shillings, and giving a premium or interest, so as not directly to violate the laws. But in such extreme necessity, we should not be too scrupulous, for all will be lost, if credit be not soon found to pay the fleet and the army, especially the troops who are in these parts. As you know all the importance of this business, I flatter myself you will do every thing that is possible, to assemble the parliament in June, for the purpose of remedying this great evil. This measure requires much reflection; and nothing except the utmost necessity could induce me to recur to it, but that may be such as to force us to it.

"I have to-day received a letter from lord Capel, which, however, he was unable to sign. He requests my permission to repair to Bath, an indulgence which I cannot well refuse, though I question much whether he will have sufficient strength to take the journey; so that the government of Ireland will doubtless be soon vacant. You may believe, that I would confer it on you with the greatest pleasure, if you desired it; but I do not see how you can be absent from England before my return, since it is certain, that the whole weight of the government, in a great measure, rests on you, in my absence.

"As I foresaw, and have often told you, it has happened, that the unfortunate counter-order of the admiralty to sir Cloudesley

Shovel, to remain in the Downs, and their negligence in not recalling that order, which they had sent to Plymouth to sir George Rooke, are the causes that we have not prevented the entrance of the squadron of Chateau Regnaud into Brest, which could not otherwise have failed, which would have been the most effectual blow possible, and would, perhaps, have decided the fate of the war. But this fine opportunity has been lost by inconceivable faults, which can only serve to occupy the parliament next winter.

"To-morrow I am going to a conference with the elector of Bavaria, near Antwerp, and from thence I shall proceed to Flanders, to review the army. I shall then return for the commencement of the campaign, to that which is in Brabant. It is impossible yet to judge what we may be able to do. I own I have little inclination for a defensive war, but, I assure you, I will risk nothing unadvisedly.

"P. S. On preparing to seal my letter, I received your's of the 22nd,* and learn, that the new bank have made some proposals for remitting money, although very unfavourable. In our present necessity, we must not be scrupulous, but must adopt those means which are the least disadvantageous. In the name of God, determine quickly to find some credit for the troops here, or we are ruined."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Difficulty of raising money—Difference of opinions in the council—Proposal for the establishment of a land bank—Reflections on the state of the government in Ireland.]

"*Whitehall, May* 29-*June* 8, 1696.—Sir; It has been a great misfortune, at the same time the species of money is for the most part made not current, that the credit of bills is also lost. If no way can be found to restore this, it will be absolutely impossible to furnish the occasions of your majesty's government at home or abroad. We have taken what pains we could with the bank, the merchants, and the goldsmiths, exhorting some, and threatening

* Alluding to the letter of May 12-22.

others, to endeavour to make them easy to one another in this common difficulty. Many now appear sensible it is their interest to be so, and were persuaded this morning to agree upon a meeting among themselves, where, if they could conclude upon any thing that might be for the common good, we promised them any assistance in our power; and some among them seemed not to despair, but methods might be proposed, in a good measure, to help this calamity.

"The proposals of the gentlemen of the new national bank, have been heard, and considered at council, where many of the lords, and I am sure myself for one, should have been most ready to comply with any thing possible, as thinking that the most likely, if not the only way of raising the money that is now so necessary for the service; but the attorney and the solicitor general were so positive, that by law we could not give the directions to the Treasury, relating to the first proposal of receiving part in clipt money, and which the Treasury expected from us, before they would comply with such a demand, that we were forced to tell them, the first proposal was not in our power. But as to all the others, we did most earnestly recommend to the lords of the Treasury to give them all reasonable encouragement, and I believe they are now attending there, and conclude my lord Godolphin will give your majesty to-night an account what is to be expected.

"The letters which arrived to-day from Ireland, report my lord Capel something better, but yet I doubt his recovery is not to be expected. Your majesty's expressions to me are so kind, and so much above my desert, that I were most inexcusable if I did not submit every thing relating to myself, to be disposed of in the manner your majesty shall think most fit for your service. It were to be wished that kingdom might be put into the hands of somebody, that would not let it return to feuds and animosities, which possibly might be prevented, if a prudent man were there, that would take in both parties, or as many, at least, of them as would unite in your majesty's interest, which I think might be effected better by a single person, than by more, who would be apt to

divide, and set themselves at the head of the several parties. My lord Darnley has desired me to mention him to your majesty, in case you send justices, and I am sure you can appoint nobody that more sincerely intends your service. I hear my lord Clifford and sir Joseph Williamson have the same pretension; and though neither of them has mentioned any thing to me, I name them, that your majesty may have as many persons in your mind as I can learn are, or will be, pretenders.

"If your majesty shall not think fit to grant Mr. Russell what I have mentioned to Mr. Blaithwayt, in favour of his brother, perhaps the easiest way of refusing it is, by desiring first to receive the opinion of the committee of Plantations on the new commission of Trade."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Complains of the delays and scruples of the government in England in raising supplies—Urges the necessity of immediate decision.]

"*Camp of Waveren, June* 18-8, 1696.—In two days, three posts have arrived from England, and I have received your letter of the 29th May, O. S. I confess to you, that I did not expect to hear that no resolution was yet taken to obtain credit, by some means or other; as in our present situation, we must not consider whether the conditions are reasonable, but accept them, at any rate; for money or credit we must speedily have, or all will be lost. If in England they could see as clearly as I do here, I am sure they would employ every means in their power, without too closely examining the difficulties. The greatest difficulty is ruin, and that we must encounter, if we cannot speedily obtain credit, to pay the troops in these parts. It is impossible for me, at this distance, to enter into particulars; all I can say is, that it is necessary to determine which is best, without losing a moment, and not to consider what is reasonable, or difficult, but to pass over things, which we should not do at other times; for there is no alternative, but to perish, or find credit. This is all I can say for the present, referring you for the rest, to what Blaithwayt may write."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Doubts with regard to the efficiency of the new bank—Exorbitancy of their demands—On the measures to be adopted with the county officers who had not signed the association—Considerations on the future government of Ireland.]

"*Whitehall, June* 5-15, 1696.—Sir; I suppose my lord Godolphin will give your majesty an account what new proposals have been made by the gentlemen of the land bank, and what answer has been returned to them by the Treasury, and how that answer has been approved by the justices, and the council. The chief argument to induce the lords of the council to be unanimously of opinion, that no farther encouragement should be allowed to the new bank, was not so much the consideration of the exorbitancy of the demand, which being to be laid wholly upon the civil list, the 2,500,000*l.* being all appropriated by parliament to several uses, would have extremely incommoded your majesty's affairs, but chiefly the improbability that the subscriptions would, even upon such an encouragement as they demanded, amount to more than would justserve to constitute them a bank. And half the money only being subscribed upon such large terms, the rest could not be borrowed from private persons, without yet larger, and the appropriation to repay the credit upon the coal tax, &c., as well as that for the fleet, being to take place of the payments to the army, the necessity of the last could not be relieved, if the Treasury had no prospect of raising the whole sum, and discharging the aforementioned appropriations.

"In the manner it is now agreed, if the gentlemen can procure subscriptions sufficient to make themselves a corporation, the Treasury hope assistance from the credit of exchequer bills, for a good part of the rest; which help, in the other method, would have become almost ineffectual, by raising the price of loans to such an extravagant degree.

"In our letter to your majesty you will observe we desire directions in relation to the justices of the peace, the militia officers, and deputy lieutenants, who have not signed the voluntary association. If your majesty should continue in the opinion, that all

such should be removed from their commissions, it might perhaps be proper, that, at the same time, it were examined, if there were any notoriously disaffected in those commissions, who, though they have signed, might, upon this occasion, be turned out with the rest. For what relates to the non-swearers, I think your majesty's intention was, none should be convicted, or punished by the power given in the last act, but such who, by their insolence, or great indiscretion, should distinguish their disaffection.

"The warrant sent over for the adding two lives after one who is now in possession of clerk of the hanaper, in Chancery, was what my lord keeper requested, and your majesty was pleased to promise some few days before you left England. Judge Turton, whom my lord keeper recommends as fit to be promoted to the King's-bench, in Gregory's place, lately dead, has been a baron of the Exchequer, ever since your majesty came to the crown, and a man very zealous in your interest. Serjeant Blenko, who my lord keeper proposes should succeed as baron, in Turton's place, is one who, in former parliaments, has served very well, though now not in the house. He is an honest and an able lawyer, and son-in-law to Dr. Wallis of Oxford, who deciphers the letters, and will think any thing done for him at least as great an obligation as if it were to himself.

"I have been a very true prophet in what relates to lord Berkeley's proposal.

"My name having been mentioned for Ireland, I am the more unwilling to speak upon that subject; but I cannot forbear saying thus much, that in case my lord deputy die, the proper time to unite that people, will be immediately upon the change; and if a parliament meet in autumn, with common good management, probably, they will be prevailed on, to grant your majesty a farther supply, and each party will strive to ingratiate themselves, by their forwardness to promote the public business. In winter I conclude a parliament cannot sit there, because one will be necessary here; and if it be deferred longer, it will not be so easy for one, or more governors, to carry themselves so to the content of both parties for a year together, that the same union and advantage

might be hoped from a parliament autumn come twelvemonth, that might be reasonably expected this year.".

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Acknowledges the remittance of 100,000*l.* from England, but requires farther and regular supplies, as the only expedient to prevent ruin—Death of lord Capel—Expects the opinion of the lords justices, on the intended arrangements for Ireland—Complains again of the failure of the fleet.]

"*Camp of Corbais, June* 15-25, 1696.—I had not time by the last post fully to answer your letter of the 5-15th of this month. I was much pleased to hear that means had been found to remit for the army 100,000*l.*, which, though a large sum, is, in fact, but little, when you consider what is owing to the troops, and other demands. For this reason, we shall again be involved in the same distress, if you cannot continue to remit large sums, or obtain farther credit. I own this business of the money in England, gives me very great uneasiness. It is, however, necessary to find the least objectionable means to extricate ourselves, and re-establish credit, without loss of time, or we must inevitably perish.

"Since I received your letter, I have been informed of the death of lord Capel. I wait the answer of the lords justices, to know whom they will recommend me to place in that government, till I can appoint a lord lieutenant, thinking that I cannot properly do it before my return to England; though if I could, I am of your opinion, that it would be best to do it immediately.

"I cannot console myself for the failure of the attempt with our fleet, particularly as I perceive that great armament and expense will be of no avail, and which, as you know, I clearly foresaw. I never considered the last proposal lord Berkeley made, but as a mere gasconade.* I am very apprehensive that our operations by land will not be more effective than those by sea. Provided the duke of Savoy does not make a separate accommodation, a general peace may be hoped for in the course of this winter, which

* The king here alludes to the expedition of lord Berkeley, against the western coasts of France, which terminated only in the injury of a few petty towns and hamlets, and produced little more effect than to spread alarm.

is much spoken of; but to tell you frankly my opinion, I see but little probability of it."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Farther expedients for restoring public credit—Difficulty of recommending proper persons for Ireland—Peace much desired—Apprehensive of the secret machinations of France.]

"*Whitehall, June 23-July 3, 1696.*—Sir; I omitted writing last post, because I knew not what to say, in answer to your majesty's letter of the 8-18th, that pressed, with such reason, the necessity of remitting money. I was informed 100,000*l.* was returned, but was without a near prospect of farther supplies, that would signify but little. I am not able now to say much with certainty on this subject; but the lords of the Treasury are using all possible methods to restore the paper credit, and particularly to establish exchequer bills. What the success of it will be, nobody can yet determine: a little time will give more light; but the want of current coin makes every thing difficult, and puts the people to great straits. We have proposals before us for giving some redress to this evil, and the discontents it occasions; but nothing is yet enough digested, or resolved, to trouble your majesty with.

"It was very difficult for us to bring ourselves to propose any persons to your majesty, for so great a trust as the government of Ireland; nor do I believe any one of us is pleased entirely with the persons we have offered; but I think men are very scarce, that one can satisfy one's self in recommending to any places of trust, and application, but more so upon this occasion, when one could not mention it to any, with a prospect of remaining long there. I presume your majesty has some knowledge of every one of these, except sir Chris. Wandesford, who is wholly unknown to me, but I am told is a person of good estate, sense, and courage. I shall venture to add one thing, as my own single opinion, that I doubt if my lord chancellor* and Drogheda be

* Sir Charles Porter.—See note to the letter of Jan. 22, 1696.

both in the commission, it will put the party that was my lord Capel's, into more despair and rage than may be advisable in the circumstances of that kingdom.

"Sir Thomas Sedley desires me to put your majesty in mind, that you were pleased to tell him, the day before you left England, that you would let him know to whom he should apply himself, relating to a promise formerly made, but that since that time he has never received any such direction. There is likewise a Report of sir Francis Brewster's, which he desires me to recommend to your majesty's favour, and says the Treasury think it reasonable. He is one who carried himself, the last parliament, with great moderation between the parties, and therefore may be useful the next. He had a very good recommendation also from my lord Capel. I conclude your majesty has very good and just reasons for stopping my lord Bellew's* pardon, and therefore shall press you no farther on that subject.

"It is certain, as your majesty observes in your's of the 15-25th, that a peace is much discoursed of; a good one every body would desire, and many are so weary as to be content with a bad one. But I think what is most of all to be apprehended, is, that these secret treaties, which we are told are on foot, in more than one place, are only designed by the French to disunite the allies, which perhaps is the best method they have now left to accomplish their own designs, and to ruin your majesty, whose safety, glory, and happiness is the constant and earnest wish of, Sir," &c.

The ensuing letter from the king merits particular attention, as it announces the defection of the duke of Savoy from the grand alliance; an event, rendered more mortifying by the secrecy with which it was accomplished, and the fatal effects which it produced to the public cause. It will be more fully developed in another part of this collection.†

* Richard, lord Bellew, an Irish peer, who had been outlawed for his attachment to king James; he was soon afterwards restored.

† See the correspondence of lord Galway with the duke of Shrewsbury, and the accompanying narrative.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Defection of the duke of Savoy—Hopes to prevent the neutrality of Italy—Necessity of continuing the war—Superiority of the enemy, and prospect of an inactive campaign—Pressing necessity of supplies.]

"*Camp of Gemblours, July* 23, 1696.—It is some time since I wrote to you, having nothing agreeable to communicate, nor any answer to give to your letters, but what I could trust to Blaithwayt. I have now only bad news to impart; we have certainly lost the duke of Savoy, who has tricked us. I believe, however, that we can throw many difficulties in the execution of his treaty, and that at least it will not be concluded before the end of the campaign. I have, nevertheless, sent orders to oppose the neutrality of Italy, which is the thing, of all others, most prejudicial to us; and I hope I shall be able to induce the House of Austria to continue the war in Italy, by contributing what I have hitherto given to the duke of Savoy. It will be necessary that we should, on all sides, make the greatest efforts, as I at present see no probability of peace, except on conditions that would be insupportable. And I am convinced, that if France sees we are resolved to continue the war with vigour, she will at last be obliged to accede to a reasonable peace.

"I am also very much vexed that I can give you no hopes of undertaking any thing considerable this campaign, the enemy being in too great force to admit of my attempting a siege, without too much risk, which, in my opinion, is not at this time advisable, unless, by the movements I am now making, the enemy should give me a favourable opportunity. I am very apprehensive this campaign will pass very peaceably, which to me will be no small mortification.

"By the last post, lord Godolphin gives me some hopes that means may at length be found to re-establish our credit. I trust this business will be soon terminated in one way or other, suspense being the greatest evil. In this, as in many other cases, it is better to take wrong measures than not to act at all. We are here reduced to greater extremities than ever, for want of money; and if we do not soon receive some remittances, the army will be disbanded."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Regrets the defection of the duke of Savoy—Difficulty of continuing the war, from the want of money—Distress of the country—Necessity of peace.]

"*Whitehall, July* 21-31, 1696.—Sir; I have received the honour of your majesty's letters of the 13-23rd, and wish the duke of Savoy, for an appearance of immediate advantage, had not sold his own reputation, and the interest of his friends, all which, with more patience, might have been preserved. I imagine he has not made this step, but at the same time, he has agreed with France to join his forces, for the quieting of Italy, if there shall be occasion, in which case, how successfully the war can be carried on in those parts, nobody can judge so well as yourself.

"The posture of affairs in Flanders being such, that I perceive your majesty has no great hopes of doing any thing considerable there, I cannot see there is a prospect in any other part of the world of more than acting defensively; so that, in all appearance, this campaign will end in a very discouraging manner for the allies. And how far such circumstances, improved by french money and artifice, may prevail upon other princes to follow the duke of Savoy's example, is to me a very melancholy reflection, and much more so when I consider our own condition at home, encompassed with so many difficulties, from the ruin of all credit, the scarcity of money, the deficiency in the supply for restoring the coin, and other anticipations, that I dare confidently affirm, no remedy so speedy and effectual can be found as will put the nation in a capacity, the next year, to furnish such sums as have been given in former sessions. A willing parliament may pass acts, but I fear the money can neither be raised nor borrowed.

"I think it my duty to lay this before your majesty, and because I think it of the last importance in this conjuncture, that you should be exactly informed of affairs at home, which might otherwise misguide you in your considerations of those abroad, I hope you will have the opinion of others on this subject, who are much better able to judge than I am. The resolution, whether a peace upon such terms as it is reasonable now to expect from

France, be to be wished, or no, is attended with so many considerations beyond my search, and so many circumstances out of my knowledge, that it would be too great presumption in me to speak on that subject. I cannot see that a town more or less is very material to your majesty's interest, provided the princes more nearly concerned are contented with it.

"Above all things, it is necessary the allies should be satisfied with the conclusion of the war; that, continuing their just opinion of your majesty's unshaken constancy and virtue, they may be ready to engage with you upon any other occasion; but if they are pleased, though they should be a little more exposed, and not have such a barrier to protect them, as were to be wished, yet, by that weakness, they seem the more necessarily obliged to seek their safety, only from the strength and firmness of the alliance. If the condition of affairs in Europe could give a reasonable prospect, that in a short time the power of France, by sea and land, would be reduced to what it was but forty years since, a great deal ought to be ventured to attain such a state of quiet and security; but, under the circumstances before mentioned, whether that can be hoped, and whether any less design be worth the hazarding all, is humbly submitted to your majesty."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[His despondency at being disappointed of supplies.—Entreats the ministry to devise some immediate and practicable plan.]

"*Camp of Altere, July* 20-30, 1696.—The letter from the lords justices of the 14th has quite overcome me, and I know not where I am, since at present I see no resource which can prevent the army from mutiny or total desertion; for it is more impossible to find here, than in England, money sufficient for their subsistence; so that if you cannot devise expedients to send contributions, or procure credit, all is lost, and I must go to the Indies. In such great extremities, endeavours must be made to discover extraordinary remedies. As to myself, I cannot point out any; but you, who are on the spot, can form a better

judgment. I am so convinced of your zeal for my service, that I have no doubt but you will do every thing that is possible to be done, to prevent such fatal evils, on which depends the good of the nation, as well as of all Europe."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Sends the earl of Portland to represent the extremity of his situation—Consents to an immediate meeting of parliament.]

"*Camp of Altere, July* 21-31, 1696.—In the extremity to which we are reduced, I have been obliged to send the earl of Portland to England, that he might represent it to you more particularly, and consult with you, whether, in this great necessity, there is no other remedy but that of convoking the parliament. if so, I give my consent, at the same time I know the difficulty, and even danger, of assembling it during my absence; but rather than perish, all must be risked. You will, I am sure, justly appreciate the importance of this affair, and adopt such measures as you think will be most beneficial to me and the country.

"For the rest, I refer you to what the earl of Portland will communicate to you, and to the assurances he will give you of the continuance of my esteem."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Necessity of raising money—The lords justices deem it impolitic to assemble the parliament—Communications from sir John Fenwick to the duke of Devonshire—Thinks he may make discoveries of more value than his life—Hopes of the Jacobites.]

"*Whitehall, July* 28-*Aug.* 7, 1696.—Sir; I have had the honour of your majesty's letters of the 20th by the post, and 21st by my lord Portland; and being very sensible of the necessity there is to supply the army abroad, I am sure I have omitted no care nor pains to employ my poor thoughts, and my small credit, to get it effected. Some of those gentlemen, who had procured money for shares in the land bank, seem so convinced of the consequence it would be of, that your majesty's army beyond sea, should not be reduced to extremity, that they promise and hope to engage others to lend a considerable sum

upon a good premium. My lord Portland, my lord Godolphin, and I, are to speak with some of the principals to-morrow, and I have already had good encouragement from Mr. Foley and Mr. Harley, that money will be got, with good words and good advantage. In this exigence I think they will deserve both. If this should fail, which we shall be better informed of to-morrow, we are not without hopes but that a voluntary subscription, beginning with your majesty's servants, and promoted every where, as a distinguishing mark of affection, in this conjuncture, to your government, may have a good effect. But if the other succeed, this probably may not be tried.

"Your majesty will perhaps wonder, that in these circumstances, the parliament should be prorogued so long as to the 1st of September; but it was universally the opinion of all here, that a session in your absence, and in the divisions the nation labours under now, would produce nothing but heat among themselves, and petitions from all the counties, about the state of the money; that they could afford little help as to a present supply, but by the expectation they would raise, that clipt money should be current again, or a recompence allowed for it; that the standard should be advanced, and the price of guineas improved. This would, in the mean time, hinder any specie to be parted with, either for the occasions of the government, or the public commerce; but every man would keep what he had in his hands, with reasonable hopes of parting with it, after the parliament, upon better advantage.

"I am not acquainted with the particulars my lord steward has sent your majesty from sir John Fenwick. He is generally reputed a fearful man, and though now he may not offer to say all, yet beginning to treat is no contradiction to that character. I am confident he knows what, if he will discover, may be much more valuable than his life.* If he were well managed, possibly

* This remark shews that the duke of Shrewsbury had not the least dread or suspicion of sir John Fenwick's disclosures. It proves that he had no fear of the accusation which was afterwards brought against him; and furnishes indisputable evidence of his innocence. —See the commencement of the next chapter.

he might lay open a scene that would facilitate the business the next winter, which, without some such miracle, I doubt will be difficult enough. An acquaintance of mine saw a fresh letter to my lady Waldegrave from my lord Galmoye,* at St. Germain's, who, I think, is her husband, where he says he has never been credulous in the hopes of king James's coming, but that now he is well assured it will be attempted the end of this year, and with good appearance of success. The same person saw another letter from another hand, he would not say from whom, but from one more likely to know than the former, and spoke in the same language, but with more assurance."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Is mortified by the failure of every attempt to retrieve public credit—Hopes there will be no farther defection among the allies—Thinks that a declaration of the inability of England to prosecute the war, will occasion the ruin of the grand alliance.]

"*Camp of Altere, August* 6, 1696.—Your letter of the 21st July, which I received by the last post, mortifies me not a little, as I see that you have no hopes of being able in England to remedy the disorder of the coinage, nor to re-establish credit in sufficient time to furnish supplies for the continuance of the war the next year. If the enemy know our situation, of which indeed they are but too well informed, there can be no hopes of peace.

"In regard to the allies, I own I have no fears of any farther defection, after the base conduct of the duke of Savoy. But I do not think we can oblige the allies to accept the offer of peace made by France, unless we force them; that is, by declaring that we can give them no farther assistance, which is a declaration hazardous, not only because the House of Austria may anticipate us, by making a separate peace, but also, because after the conclusion of a general peace, there are no hopes of continuing the grand alliance, which is, however, our only security. May God relieve us from our present embarrassment, for I cannot suppose that it

* Viscount Galmoye, one of the Irish adherents of king James, whose title was forfeited in 1690.

is his will to suffer a nation to perish, which he has so often almost miraculously saved, though we have too well deserved it."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Disappointed of all hopes of assistance from the land bank.]

"*Whitehall, July* 31-*Aug.* 10, 1696.—Sir; I hoped I should have given your majesty a better account this post of the progress those gentlemen had made, who having procured money for the land bank, were said to be willing to furnish your majesty with a considerable sum, in this time of necessity, in order to entitle themselves to your favour, and to that of the parliament the next session. But after some meetings, my lord Portland, lord Godolphin, and I, have had with them, and several discourses that we and others have had with those, who are supposed to have great influence upon them, all they have yet subscribed is, forty thousand pounds. Your majesty will receive so much a better account from the other two lords of this whole proceeding, that I shall not trouble you with a repetition, only I confess they appeared to-night so willing to quarrel upon a very slight occasion, that I much apprehend their performance of what has been so often and so positively promised. I wish I may be mistaken. We have all told my lord Portland he must not stir from hence till this matter be over, some way or other; I wish it may be soon to your majesty's satisfaction, and am, with all duty," &c.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Regrets the failure of the land bank—Wishes a fleet to be sent out for the protection of the spanish galleons.]

"*Camp of Altere, Aug.* 14, 1696.—I last night received your letter of the 31st July-10th August. I am very much concerned to find, that, after the flattering hopes which were held out of a subscription for 100,000*l.*, it has not been effected; as I very much fear, unless some such means are adopted, money or credit will with difficulty be found, sufficient to supply our necessities.

"I send this express, for the purpose of accelerating the

departure of a squadron to meet and protect the spanish galleons, in which the english and dutch are more interested than the natives. According to the information I have received, they will shortly arrive, and there is no doubt that the squadrons of Nesmond and Chateauregnaud are destined to intercept them. You perceive the importance of this affair, and I am sure you will do all in your power to promote it, and to counteract the usual tardiness of our admiralty. I also wish that Bembow would put to sea without delay, and sail in pursuit of du Bart, who is likely to do us much harm."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Láments the failure of the land bank—Other proposals offered—Deplorable state of public affairs.]

"*Whitehall, Aug.* 4-14, 1696.—Sir; I am very sorry to acquaint you, that after the large repeated promises of those gentlemen of the land bank, the most they are able to procure to be subscribed is, forty thousand pounds; and that I doubt will not be lent, but upon such terms as makes it of no use to your majesty's present occasions. My lord Portland, lord Godolphin, and myself, having received this bad answer late this evening, have resolved to summon the lords justices to acquaint them with it tomorrow morning, and to have the Treasury ready to be consulted with, as I suppose there will be occasion. Some of my acquaintance tell me there is another set of men, who will upon this exigence shew their good will. Any thing that produces such an effect, will be welcome at this time; but if God delivers us from these present straits, every thing that has happened, in the endeavouring to procure this loan, does more and more convince me, that our condition is no better than I laid before your majesty some time since."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Hopes the bank of England may be induced to advance 200,000*l.* for the current service—Argues on the impracticability of any other expedient.

"*Whitehall, Aug.* 7-17, 1696.—Sir; I am under more uneasi-

ness than I can express, that I am not able yet to give your majesty a positive and certain account, what may be expected in relation to supplying the army with returns of money from hence. Having met with disappointments from the gentlemen of the land bank, we have now applied ourselves to the bank of England, and have encouragement from some to hope, that with good words, and some promises, to recommend to your majesty the directing the losses they have suffered by the returns of money, and otherwise by the government to be stated, and a reasonable consideration had of them in due time, they may be induced to advance 200,000*l.*, which the lords of the Treasury say, would, in a great measure, carry on the several services, till the meeting of the parliament. If this should not succeed, God knows what can be done: a general subscription, it is doubted, will come but to little, and has so much the air of a brief, that it will not be much for the reputation of the government, which I believe is one thing to be considered in the present conjuncture. A loan from the city is much doubted also, by the incapacity which has appeared in many to discharge the bills which have been drawn on them from all parts. Either or both of these attempted, and failing, is proclaiming our misery; yet any thing must be tried and ventured, rather than lie down and die.

"When my lord Portland returns, he will acquaint your majesty with our circumstances, much better than I can describe in a letter: he has had but too good an opportunity of examining them to the bottom. I desire no more than that your majesty should know the truth, and then nobody can judge so well as yourself. Only in answer to your majesty's of the 6th N. S., I shall presume to offer, that if a peace must not be concluded, till so many humours and interests are contented, as compose this alliance, I shall despair that such a conjuncture will ever be found. All people agree, that the states are satisfied by these offers in the most material things they desire. The letters from Vienna say, the emperor and his minister, are fond of the peace on the same conditions. These I take to be the most, if not the only important members of your majesty's alliance. It is said the circles of Suabia

and Franconia, will be uneasy at the demolishing the new fortifications of Strasburgh; but is it reasonable your majesty should hazard your crown, and Europe its liberty, to please those gentlemen, who judge upon expectations from hence, and perhaps from Holland, which possibly neither the one nor the other is able to make good?

"It would not be advisable to lay open the state of this country, I own, equal to what I fear is the truth, but yet enough might be said to shew them, that a tolerable peace is very desirable; and that though we are not in a condition to prosecute the war with that vigour it has hitherto been carried on, yet a trading and a free people, like England and Holland, will, in one year of quiet, recover more strength, than France can in five. The circumstances here are different from those of any country: suffering makes men dissatisfied; and how far that, by degrees, may be improved to the ruin of the whole, nobody can tell. But I hope I shall be pardoned for the ignorant freedom with which I write, Sir, as it proceeds from the zeal and sincerity of," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Requests the grant of a warrant empowering himself, the lord keeper, and others, to fit out a ship for seizing pirates—Recommends the king to reserve a share of the prizes to himself.]

"*Aug.* 15-25, 1696.—Sir; I presume to give your majesty the trouble of this letter, and of the inclosed warrant,* at the desire of my lord keeper, and my lord Romney, who being engaged with my lord Bellamont, Mr. Russell, and myself, and some others, in a project of fitting out a ship, which has your majesty's commission under the great seal, for seizing pirates, and has cost about 6,000*l.* the fitting out, though what shall be taken by her will be of no advantage to us, unless we have your majesty's grant, which this warrant is in order to obtain. They have desired it may be inclosed to yourself, being not willing Mr. Blaithwayt should

* This was the warrant for fitting out a sloop, under capt. Kidd, for the capture of pirates, which afterwards became a subject of parliamentary inquiry.—See the correspondence with the whig lords, in 1699 and 1700.

have knowledge of it, some of the governors in the plantations, who are his friends, being greatly suspected to have made considerable advantage by conniving at these pirates. For the same reason the warrant is dated from the time of your majesty's being here, that he might not countersign it. There is a blank for the names of the persons, to whom this grant is to be made, because we are not agreed what names to make use of. If we have any good success in this project, it is likely we shall soon have the news of it, therefore beg we may know your pleasure. Your majesty may remember I mentioned this to you, when the ship was getting ready, and you were then pleased to say we should not want your favour."

"P. S. I take the liberty to add this note, and desire it may be without the knowledge of my partners, that if by reason of the noise these pirates have made of late, and of the great wealth that may perhaps be found amongst them, what we ask may possibly fall out too much, your majesty may please to reserve what share you think fit to yourself, and direct me to send over another warrant to that effect; or else take time to consider of the grant, and in the interim, order me to assure the partners, that if any thing shall be seized by the ship, which was put out at their cost, you will be very kind in considering not only their expense, but the hazard they have run."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Return of the earl of Portland—The advance of 200,000*l.* not adequate to his necessities—Suggests the anticipation of the land tax—Remains on the continent to superintend the negotiation for peace.]

"*Aug.* 24-*Sept.* 3, 1696.—The earl of Portland returned yesterday, and has fully informed me of what passed during his journey to England. He cannot say enough in favour of your civilities and frankness, and has acquainted me with your zeal and endeavours for my service, for which I am obliged to you, being greatly concerned that you are not seconded as we could wish, which would produce more activity in our business than we find.

"Blaithwayt will have informed you of my answer to the managers of the bank, it being very reasonable that they should be rewarded for the good services they have rendered me on this occasion, which are not inconsiderable, but the sum of 200,000*l.* will not suffice for our necessities. And as lord Godolphin writes me word, that no more can be expected for the troops, before the session of parliament, on account of so many other pressing necessities, I wish much that we could carry into execution a proposal that lord Portland informs me had been made, to oblige the commissioners of each county to send duplicates of their registers, to ascertain their effective payments to the receivers of the land tax, in order to employ the money which they have sent to the exchequer, and which they have advanced, without having actually received it from the contributors. This, as I am informed, would produce a large sum, and would not be prejudicial to any one, if tallies were given to the receivers. The principal objection to this expedient is, that it would be deemed contrary to the appropriation of the money voted by parliament. But even should that be the case, I doubt not that in the first session an indemnity might be obtained for having acted irregularly in so urgent a necessity; so that if the business is in any way practicable, I desire you would press it; for I foresee that, without the authority of the lords justices, nothing will be done in this affair, where we are apparently opposed by so many private interests.

"I am not able to fix an earlier day for the meeting of parliament than the 20th or 21st of October, O. S., since it is absolutely necessary that I should remain in this country, at least a whole month, in order to put the negotiation for peace in train, without which all things would be in confusion; so that, I assure you, it is not either my amusements or other views, which oblige me to delay my return to England, where I know my presence is so necessary. I inclose the warrant, signed, which you sent me. If the prizes should be very considerable, I should wish to reserve a part for my disposal, which you may easily have inserted."

REPLY OF THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Difficulty of obtaining money from the bank—The anticipation of the land tax illegal.]

"*Whitehall, Sept.* 1-11, 1696.—Sir; I have not this long while been sensible of so real a joy as I was to find, by your majesty's letter of the 24th of August, that you were satisfied with my endeavours to serve you. I wish I could please myself better with the effects, and that I were not obliged to attribute this opinion of your majesty's to your own natural indulgence, and my lord Portland's kind representation, rather than to any merit of mine, beyond sincere intentions to promote your's, and the kingdom's interest to the utmost of my power, without being able to contribute much to either. Because the Treasury are not ready to come to an account with the bank as yet, I find they are a little restive in returning more money, till they have some certainty what consideration will be had of their past losses. At the same time the proposition my lord Portland made to your majesty, is by the lords justices and the Treasury, judged neither practicable nor desirable: not practicable, first, in point of time, the commissioners not having yet returned the accounts from the several counties, though pressed to it by letters from the Treasury; and secondly, it is contrary to so many acts of parliament, that though we and the Treasury were willing to venture ourselves upon the mercy of a parliament, yet many of the under officers, who must concur in such a proceeding, having places for life, will never venture their employments upon so doubtful a point, and cannot be compelled to it, because the thing is in itself not warrantable. They say it is not advisable, because the credit of the exchequer will be extremely weakened by any precedent of breaking into appropriations. The lords of the Treasury, in their answer to Mr. Blaithwayt, will enlarge upon these, and other arguments. Much was said of it to-day, and at last all agreed it was impossible.

"I have received the warrant your majesty was graciously pleased to sign. A share shall be reserved to your disposal, and I

wish you had been pleased to declare how much you would command.

THE EARL OF PORTLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Sept.* 4, *N. S.*, 1696."—After thanking his grace for the civilities and attentions he received from him during his stay in England, as well as for his sincerity and frankness, and soliciting the continuance of his friendship, he adds, "I have pressed, as much as possible, the assembling of parliament, and as his majesty has fixed it for the month of October, which is much earlier than you expected, you will see how he feels the necessity of gaining time, and which he could not have done had he not already quitted the army. I arrived here the day before yesterday, and saw the king last night, but I have had no time to speak to his majesty on all the affairs of state, nor does the post permit me to say more to you, than that I am truly your's."

REPLY OF THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Thanks the earl for the favourable representation he has made of his conduct—Will always speak his mind freely.]

"*Whitehall, Sept.* 1-11, 1696.—My lord; I perceive, by a letter the king has done me the honour to write, since your arrival, that your lordship has represented the zeal of my intentions, and my poor services, with such advantage to his majesty, that I ought not, nor shall ever forget the obligation. It is with the same goodness, that in your's of the 4th, N. S., you are willing to acknowledge and set some value upon the freedom I used in laying some matters here before you. I can hold my tongue; but if I speak, it must be in that style; and knowing your own natural sincerity, and our long undisputed fidelity to his majesty, I did then, and shall upon all occasions for the future, since you are so kind to encourage it, proceed with the same frankness, and open my heart in all things relating to his majesty's service.

"The town make themselves sure the king will not only enjoy

here a peace, but a queen.* If his majesty thinks of going any where into the country after his arrival, and before the meeting of the parliament, it would be a great convenience to me, if I might know which way he designs."

THE EARL OF PORTLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Gratified by the acceptance of his offer of friendship—Regrets that the bank declines advancing money to government.]

"*Loo, September* 8-18, 1696.—Sir; From the sincere consideration and respect which I entertain for you, I feel peculiar satisfaction in receiving your letter of the 11th of this month, as I perceive that you are assured I have done you justice. That is merely the duty of every honest man, and I shall never fail to perform it towards every one. Ever since I had the honour to know you, I have perceived a coldness and reserve towards me, which I wished not to deserve; but rather than attribute it to you, I have concluded that I was myself the cause of it, being sufficiently just to myself, to know part of my failings. But as we cannot control those which arise from nature, and which are born with us, I have deemed the evil incurable, and have merely paid to the minister and secretary of state, the respect which was due to him, without troubling myself farther. But as it is the will of fortune, that you should personally testify to me your approbation of my conduct, and express your satisfaction with it, I assure you, Sir, that I shall return the same cordiality, and that this cold and reserved disposition, which I frankly avow, shall wholly vanish after the candour which you have had the goodness to promise me. I will request some indulgence in regard to my judgment, but none respecting my integrity; and I shall not solicit your friendship, until I shall have taken the first step to render myself worthy of it.

"I am sorry to find, by letters from lord Godolphin to the king, that the managers of the bank are no longer willing to continue the supply of money, which they have promised, until the state of

* At this time the king was much solicited to marry again, and rumour indicated several princesses as destined to share the throne of England.

their losses be adjusted and admitted. This is shewing very little confidence, after being apprised of the king's order to the Treasury. The bank company require interest to be made with the dutch merchants, to induce them to forego, for a year, the payment of the 100,000*l.* sterling, now due; for without this, they say they are unable to furnish the 200,000*l.* But since they are so unreasonable, it appears to me, that if these merchants can be persuaded not to recall their money, it would be better for them to lend it directly to the king, after the bank has paid them, than for the government to remain under an obligation for it to the latter.

"We returned hither yesterday evening from Cleves,* without any appearance of bringing back a queen, if it be thence that she is to come. As to peace, I think it is still more uncertain, since advices from France state, that after the peace of Savoy is positively concluded, it is no longer desired, and that Callieres is to continue negotiating, in order to amuse us, and thus increase the disposition of the people towards peace, the more to disgust them with war. His majesty purposes to be in England towards the end of this month; and he has no desire to be at a distance from London, before the session of parliament. I hear no more of the subscription, nor of any other means of raising money, though 200,000*l.* would scarcely serve for the army alone.

* The journey of the king to Cleves, gave rise to a rumour that he was negotiating a marriage with one of the daughters of the duke.

CHAPTER 7.

1696—1697.

Attempts of the french to invade England, and plot of the Jacobites to assassinate the king—Seizure of sir John Fenwick—His accusation against the duke of Shrewsbury and others—Magnanimity of king William—Shrewsbury injured by a fall from his horse—Decision of parliament in his favour—Bill of attainder against Fenwick—Kindness of the king—Shrewsbury repeatedly solicits leave to resign—Correspondence from Sept. 1696 to April 1697.

DURING the stay of William in Holland, a disclosure occurred, which deeply affected the duke of Shrewsbury. In the course of the preceding year, various machinations had been formed by the Jacobite party, for the purpose of overthrowing the existing government, and restoring the Stuarts. An invasion was projected with a french force, troops were privately enlisted, to promote the same cause, in England and Scotland, and James himself even repaired to Calais to superintend the execution of the plan. Some, however, of his more desperate adherents, were too impatient to wait the result of this attempt. They accordingly formed a conspiracy, without his knowledge or concurrence, to seize or assassinate William, as he returned from one of his hunting excursions to his palace at Kensington. From contrition or fear, the plot was disclosed by some of the minor agents, the design frustrated, and several of the conspirators brought to trial, and executed. The danger with which the monarch had been threatened, awakened the zeal and loyalty of his subjects; and a general Association, commencing with the parliament, was formed in defence of his person and government, which was signed with equal alacrity and enthusiasm. By this demonstration of public opinion, aided by the vigorous measures of the monarch and the legislature, the french king was deterred from attempting the proposed invasion, and the government acquired additional strength, from the very means employed to subvert it.

Among the conspirators, was sir John Fenwick, baronet, of an ancient family, seated at Wallington in Northumberland, and allied by marriage to the earl of Carlisle.* He was seized at Romney, in June, as he attempted to escape into France, by means of a false passport; and a letter which he wrote to his wife, being intercepted, was produced at his examination before the lords justices, and furnished unanswerable evidence of his guilt. He was ordered for trial, and perceiving escape impossible, offered to purchase his life, by disclosing the plots of the Jacobites. He was accordingly visited in prison, at the command of the king, by the duke of Devonshire, lord high steward. To that nobleman he first insinuated, in general terms, that several persons employed in the government, were secretly engaged in promoting a counter-revolution; and being farther pressed, he embodied the charge in a more specific shape. He delivered a written document, declaring, among other accusations, that the duke of Shrewsbury and lord Godolphin, while they held offices under king William, had entered into a treaty with king James, through the medium of lord Middleton, from whom he received the information. That Shrewsbury, about that period, resigned his employment, as secretary of state, but afterwards resumed it, with the consent of king James, as being thus more capable of rendering him service, and at the same time of avoiding suspicion. That the earl of Marlborough and admiral Russell had employed the agency of one captain Floyd, to make their peace, and obtain the promise of a pardon. That Russell had furnished information respecting the state of the fleet, and that king James depended on the interest of lord Marlborough to secure the army. Finally, that several fortresses were to be betrayed to him by the respective governors, particularly Plymouth by lord Bath, and Sheerness by commissary Crawford.† The paper containing this important disclosure was transmitted by the duke of Devon-

* He espoused lady Mary, daughter of Charles Howard, first earl of Carlisle, and aunt of Charles, third earl, who succeeded to the title in 1692.

† This paper is of considerable length, and, with the examination taken by Mr. Vernon, is printed in the Journals of the House of Commons for November 6, 1696.

shire to the king, who was then at the Hague, without any communication to the persons accused.

The correspondence which occurred on this incident, will be perused with interest. It will excite warm admiration of the magnanimity displayed by William, and will do no less honour to the candour of the duke of Shrewsbury.

So serious a charge advanced against the prime minister, in the very height of his favour, made a deep and general impression. Unfortunately, also, at a crisis which required equal energy of body and mind, he received a serious injury by a fall from his horse, in hunting, which burst a blood vessel, and detained him at his country seat at Eyford. Overwhelmed with chagrin, and debilitated by the consequences of his accident, he earnestly requested permission to resign, and was with difficulty induced to retain a post, in which he was surrounded with so much odium and suspicion. He, however, secluded himself as much as possible from public notice, and conducted the business of his department through his secretary, Mr. Vernon, or his colleagues in office. These brief observations are requisite to elucidate the subsequent correspondence between him and the sovereign.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Sends the communication of sir John Fenwick, accusing him and others of treason—Expresses full confidence in his fidelity.]

"*Loo, Sept.* 10, 1696.—I received last week, by an express from sir John Fenwick, which my lord Steward forwarded to me, the paper annexed.* You may judge of my astonishment at his effrontery, in accusing you. You are, I trust, too fully convinced of the entire confidence which I place in you, to imagine that such an accusation has made any impression on me, or that if it had, I should have sent you this paper. You will observe *the sincerity of this honest man*, who only accuses those in my service, and not one of his own party. I replied to my lord Steward,

* The accusation of which the substance is given in the preceding page.

that, unless he proved what he has written, and that he moreover confesses all he knows, without reserve, I will not permit his trial to be deferred, which is his only aim. It is necessary you should communicate this, on my part, to the lords justices, since I cannot employ Blaithwayt, who, as you well know, ought to have no cognizance of this paper."

By the same post the earl of Portland conveyed to the duke similar sentiments, on the subject of sir J. Fenwick's confession.

"*Loo, Sept.* 10, 1696."—After observing that his journey to Cleves prevented him from answering the letter of the 21st Aug. earlier, he continues: "I am much concerned for the affair of sir John Fenwick, and you will be equally so, when you see his pretended confession; for, although you are above suspicion, if it do not remain secret, every one having enemies as well as friends, it will be impossible to prevent disagreeable conversation and reflections, as I know by experience. The little appearance of sincerity in that man is sufficiently manifest in his accusing persons, on whom the king has so much reason to repose confidence, though he has had no connexion or acquaintance with them; and he names none of the Jacobites with whom he has conversed daily, not even that man of quality* whom he states to have been in France. But it is certain that he does nothing without advice; and had it been possible to prevent access to him, he would have spoken quite another language. I even think he would have done so, and would still do so, if he were spoken to as I spoke to lady Mary Fenwick. If he be not obliged to prove what he says, no reliance can be placed on his disclosures. These can signify nothing, since, to save himself, or even prolong his life, he would accuse all the members of government; and I know not why he should not name me, as well as you, since that would be equally deserving of credit."

* Probably the earl of Aylesbury.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Is surprised and indignant at the accusation of sir John Fenwick—Candidly imparts an account of his communications with lord Middleton—Is apprehensive of the effect the accusation may produce on the public mind.]

"*Whitehall, Sept.* 8-18, 1696.—Sir; I want words to express my surprise at the impudent and unaccountable accusation of sir John Fenwick. I will, with all the sincerity imaginable, give your majesty an account of the only thing I can recollect, that should give the least pretence to such an invention; and I am confident you will judge there are few men in the kingdom that have not so far transgressed the law.

"After your majesty was pleased to allow me to lay down my employment, it was more than a year before I once saw my lord Middleton;* then he came, and staid in town awhile, and

* Thomas, earl of Middleton, was son of the earl of Middleton, who distinguished himself as a leader of the episcopalian, or royal party, in Scotland; and was confidentially employed by Charles the Second in the highest posts of that government. The son adopted the principles, and imitated the example of the father; and, after filling various employments in his native country, was made secretary of state in England, by Charles, in August 1684. He was continued in the same office by James, who regarded him with still more esteem and confidence than his brother; and in the struggles of that short, but eventful reign, he served his royal master with exemplary zeal and fidelity.

Lord Middleton was among those who attended his person to the last moment; and at Rochester, while James was deliberating on his flight, joined his instances with those of the gallant Dundee and others, to persuade him not to quit England. He did not accompany the exiled sovereign on his departure, but remained behind, secretly promoting his cause to the utmost of his power. His attachment to James, however, was so notorious, that he was vigilantly watched by government, and on the threatened invasion in 1692, was, with other suspected persons, taken into custody, and confined in the Tower. Being afterwards released, he continued to direct the counsels of the Jacobites, and maintained a correspondence with the court of St. Germains. In 1693 he was sent over with the celebrated declaration, which James was required to sign, as the condition of his restoration, and which contained a solemn pledge to preserve all the rights, both civil and religious, of his former subjects.

From this period lord Middleton renounced his native country, and devoted himself to the service of his exiled master, whose fortunes he shared, and whose counsels he influenced, being his principal agent in his intrigues and correspondence with the Jacobites in England.*

* Macpherson's Papers, and Life of King James, edited by Clarke

returned to the country; but a little before the La Hogue business, he came up again, and upon that alarm, being put in the Tower, when people were permitted to see him, I visited him as often as I thought decent, for the nearness of our alliance.* Upon his enlargement, one night at supper, when he was pretty well in drink, he told me he intended to go beyond seas, and asked if I would command him no service. I then told him, by the course he was taking, it would never be in his power to do himself or his friends service; and if the time should come that he expected, I looked upon myself as an offender not to be forgiven, and therefore he should never find me asking it. In the condition he was then, he seemed shocked at my answer; and it being some months after before he went, he never mentioned his own going, or any thing else, to me, but left a message with my aunt, that he thought it better to say nothing to me, but that I might depend upon his good offices upon any occasion, and in the same manner he relied upon mine here; and had left me trustee for the small concerns he had in England. I only bowed, and told her I should always be ready to serve her, or him, or their children.

"Your majesty now knows the extent of my crime, and if I do not flatter myself, it is no more than a king may forgive.

"I am sure when I consider with what reason, justice, and generosity your majesty has weighed this man's information, I have little cause to apprehend your ill opinion upon his malice. I wish it were as easy to answer for the reasonableness of the generality of the world. When such a base invention shall be made public, they may perhaps make me incapable of serving you; but if till now I had had neither interest nor inclination, the noble and frank manner with which your majesty has used me upon this occasion, shall ever be owned with all the gratitude in my power.

* His wife, lady Catherine Bruce, was aunt to the duke of Shrewsbury, being the second daughter of Robert, earl of Cardigan, and sister of Anna Maria, countess of Shrewsbury, mother of the duke. From this relationship that family intercourse was derived, to which the duke alludes in his letter, and the frequent correspondence of his mother, who was a bigotted Catholic, with her sister and brother-in-law, and other agents of king James, always unfortunately exposed him to a considerable degree of embarrassment and suspicion.

"My lord Steward being at the Bath, nothing was resolved as to sir John Fenwick's trial, till his answer returns."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE EARL OF PORTLAND.

[Arraignment of sir John Fenwick fixed—On the mysterious communication from the duke of Devonshire—Doubtful of the sincerity of France in the proposal for a treaty.

"*Whitehall, Sept.* 11-21, 1696.—My lord; We have this day given orders for sir John Fenwick to be arraigned on Thursday, unless he pursue his majesty's directions, signified to the duke of Devon, and myself. We had once appointed it upon Monday; but on my lady Mary's earnest request, we have delayed it so long. We were the rather induced to it, because my lord Steward, when he writ to Mr. Vernon, to acquaint us with the king's pleasure, besides a letter inclosed for his majesty, which Mr. Vernon will send by to-night's post, likewise inclosed another sealed up, without any superscription or direction, in Mr. Vernon's letter, to whom this unsubscribed letter should be delivered. We, not knowing for whom this was intended, and yet not daring to open it, but thinking it possible it might concern this affair, were willing to give time, that this mistake might be rectified by my lord Devonshire, and ordered Mr. Vernon to write immediately to my lord, to know how he would have this letter disposed of.

"Your lordship speaks so doubtfully upon the king of France's sincerity in desiring a peace, that it has startled me extremely, and so has an account I have from another hand, that the french would not, at the opening of the treaty, yield the point of acknowledging the king, though they declare that shall not obstruct the peace, when other matters are agreed. This seems to me so like an artifice, to begin a negotiation, in order to give themselves a better opportunity of breaking the confederacy, that I could not help taking notice of it."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE EARL OF PORTLAND.

[Relative to sir John Fenwick's affair, and lady Mary's attempt to defer his arraignment —Proceedings of the lord justices.]

"*Whitehall, Sept.* 15-25, 1696.—My lord; I have nothing to

acquaint your lordship with, but what relates to sir John Fenwick, who is ordered to be arraigned on Thursday next, though some attempts were made again to-day, to defer it longer. The duke of Norfolk had leave to go to sir John, who desired his grace to acquaint the lords justices, that in answer to the account he had received from my lord Devonshire, of the king's letter to him, that he is willing to give all the proofs of his sincerity, in making out, as fully as he can, what my lord Devonshire sent from him to the king. It was observed, this was very short of what his majesty expected, neither giving any hopes of sufficiently proving what he had sent over, but avoiding any promise of declaring his whole knowledge. It appeared the duke of Norfolk was not instructed what the contents of that paper were, which his majesty expected a proof of. He withdrew with the lords answer, that they must follow his majesty's orders, and no longer delay bringing on the trial; then my lady Mary desired to be admitted, and with many words, pressed sir John might have time till my lord Devonshire returned, and said he was ready to make all the proof he could of what he had already discovered. But being told that though he could give convincing testimony of what he had sent over (which she did not pretend he could), yet that would be pursuing but half the king's directions, unless he were willing to declare his whole knowledge; she answered, that was more than he had ever proposed to my lord Steward; that they who told all they knew, told more than they knew, as others had done, and then (I think she muttered out Porter.)* The letter my lord Devonshire sent up, as I acquainted you in my last, without a direction, and which was the chief occasion of the trial being deferred from last Monday till Thursday, it seems was intended for me. If I am too particular on this subject, you will excuse me, but we have nothing else worth writing from hence."

---

* Capt Porter, one of the witnesses against Fenwick.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Is satisfied with his explanation, in his letter of September 8—Presses the departure of the squadron for the protection of the galleons.]

"*Loo, Sept.* 25, 1696.—In sending you sir John Fenwick's paper, I assured you, that I was persuaded his accusation was false, of which I am now fully convinced, by your answer, and perfectly satisfied with the ingenuous confession of what passed between you and lord Middleton, which can by no means be imputed to you as a crime. And indeed you may be assured, that this business, so far from making on me any unfavourable impression, will, on the contrary, if possible, in future, strengthen my confidence in you, and my friendship can admit of no increase.

"I very much fear lest the squadron for the protection of the galleons should be delayed. It is, therefore, necessary to press its departure with all possible speed, and not to leave the admiralty at rest, until it has sailed."

THE EARL OF PORTLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Is pleased to hear that the time of Fenwick's trial is fixed—Hopes it will be finished before the king's return—The emperor raises objections to the peace.]

"*Loo, September* 27, 1696, N. S.—Sir; I am honoured with yours of the 11-21, and am very glad that the time is fixed for the trial of sir John Fenwick. If he had not unfortunately addressed himself to lord Devonshire, and if from the beginning he had been spoken to as he ought to have been, I think he would not have had either leisure or inclination to invent the tales which he has told. At least I hope he will be tried before the return of the king.

"They have sent us from London, the conditions of peace, in print; I wish we were in a state to demand such terms. The last letters that have arrived from Vienna by express, are not satisfactory. They raise difficulties on several points relating to the peace, which occasion a delay not chargeable to us. It seems the ministers of the emperor are displeased that the negotiation should

be conducted here, and that they cannot have the direction of it. I have no news to send you from hence, except that the season at present is much worse than it has been during the summer."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE EARL OF PORTLAND.

[Proceedings in the affair of sir John Fenwick.]

"*Whitehall, Sept.* 18-28, 1696.—My lord; The post being not yet come in, all the news we know, is from my lord Carmarthen, who tells us the king will be at the Hague on Tuesday, that the germans have been beaten, and that there is little probability of a peace this winter.

"Yesterday sir John Fenwick was arraigned, and this day my lady Mary has pressed my lord Steward, who is returned from the Bath, to make sir John another visit, giving him hopes, that he will comply with the king's directions. My lord Steward, when he asked leave to go to Newgate, told the lords justices he would receive nothing from him, that he was not willing to say to their lordships, and that my lady Mary gave him hopes sir John would consent to attend them. I should be much surprised if he should have the confidence to say what he has writ, and yet it will be shameful for him to do otherwise, considering what has passed. Two or three days will give more light to this matter. Some few packets have passed by the way of Kent, which have been inspected, as I mentioned formerly; but so little of consequence is found in them, that I can hardly believe a boat would be sent over on purpose to receive them, but begin to suspect that I am shewed only what is immaterial, and am made a property to pass with security, packets of greater importance. To prevent this, I have put a spy over my spy, and hope, in a very few days, either to get into their correspondence, or discover that I am imposed on."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Gratefully acknowledges the king's kindness and confidence.]

"*Whitehall, Sept.* 22-*Oct.* 2, 1696.—I can but repeat what I have formerly expressed of your majesty's great goodness to me,

and your confidence in my fidelity. I assure you, Sir, the sense of it returns often to my mind, and whilst I have breath, shall always be acknowledged with that real gratitude, which so generous a proceeding deserves.

"Sir Cloudesley Shovel's squadron will be ready to go out in a few days; they stay only now for the paying some of the men.

"What relates to sir John Fenwick, I have writ to my lord Portland, desiring him to lay it before your majesty, it being too long to trouble you with."

THE EARL OF PORTLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Has shewn the duke's letters to the king—Approves his mode of proceeding.]

"*Loo, Sept.* 24-*Oct.* 4, 1696.—Sir; I am honoured with your's of the 15th and 18th. I have shewn them to the king, and I think you are much in the right to enter into particulars on an affair of such a nature as that of sir John Fenwick. I am not astonished that there should be people who are of opinion that it should be delayed, unless he tells all he knows; for if it be sufficient to accuse, without proof, which is to-day said by some, it may be said to-morrow by others; and it is the greatest service which the Jacobites can render to their party, if it were possible for them to cast suspicion on the true servants of the king. I own that after the steps which sir John has taken, he cannot well recede, without avowing himself to be a liar; but, on the other hand, how can he have the face to say to the lords justices, what he has stated in writing, since he is unable to prove it. I hope that no more delay will be allowed him, and that he will be tried before the arrival of the king.

"I am sorry that the convoy has not yet sailed; for the wind yesterday shifted to the eastward, and his majesty expects to be on Monday at the Hague, where he intends to remain only three or four days, unless the wind detains him. I know not whether lord Caermarthen be well informed on the affair of peace, but I should be of his opinion, if I judged from the manner, in which the imperialists wish this business to be treated."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE EARL OF PORTLAND.

[Mr. Vernon is ordered to send him an account of the proceedings in sir John Fenwick's affair—Laments any obstructions to the conclusion of peace.]

"*Eyford, Sept.* 27-*Oct.* 7, 1696.—My lord; I was here in the country when I received the favour of your lordship's of the 17-27. Mr. Vernon has my directions to give you an account of what passes in the business of sir John Fenwick, which will be more fresh and exact, than I am able to do from hence.

"Your lordship knows my opinion well enough to believe I am sorry for any delay or obstruction that is put to the conclusion of the peace. I may venture to assure you, it is so universally desired, and even thought necessary, by those in the country, who have hitherto been the most forward in carrying on the war, that if such a disposition be once well understood and believed in France, I doubt it will make any compliance there more difficult; therefore, in my poor opinion, delay seems to be the most dangerous thing that can happen."

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Condoles with him on his accident.]

"*Kensington, Oct.* 9, O. S. 1696.—I am much concerned to hear that you have been hurt by a fall from your horse in hunting; I hope you will soon be able to bear the motion of a carriage, and that I shall have the pleasure of seeing you here, where your presence is much wanted. I am very impatient to embrace you, and to assure you of the continuance of my esteem."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Fears that the accusation of Fenwick may become the subject of parliamentary inquiry, and hints that the malice of his enemies may oblige him to retire.]

"*Eyford, Oct.* 11-21, 1696.—Sir; I am so sensible that this is a most improper time for me to be absent, both in regard to my duty to your majesty, and my own private concern, that nothing less than necessity could have obliged me to it; but the weakness and

soreness of my breast, as well as my spitting of blood, though not violent, whilst I remain quiet, do so immediately increase, upon the least sudden motion that I have made unawares in my own chamber, and these are followed with such a sickness and faintness upon my spirits, that I am next to certain I cannot yet be able to endure the coach; but I will try as soon as possible, for I am sure there is nothing in the world I more earnestly desire, than to kiss your majesty's hands, and to give you thanks, Sir, for the generosity and confidence you have used towards me.

"I understand there are some people fully determined to put all in heat and confusion this sessions, and considering the materials they will have, and the usual disposition of a parliament, they can hardly miss their aim; but when such a thing is once begun, and a maxim settled, that hear-say is ground sufficient to defame any one, how far it may go, or where it may end, they nor nobody but God, knows. I am told the animosity of some persons to me is the great occasion of this. I presume, Sir, you may know who they are, and how little I have deserved it from them. It falls out by my misfortune, and not by my fault, that possibly they have it in their power to cast a reflection on me, that I should be extremely uneasy under, not because I shall be obliged to part with a considerable employment; your majesty may be much better served, and you are too well acquainted with my thoughts and inclinations on this subject, to believe that the cause; but having all my life acted like an honest man, it will be a severe mortification to be suspected for the contrary, though by a few, and for a little time. I am certain, however, at the end, truth will appear, and I hope I shall shew your majesty and the world, that you were not mistaken in my fidelity, nor I ungrateful for your good opinion, and the many favours I have received.

"A good cheerful vote about money, or the army, at the opening of the sessions, I should think would forward the peace, and might more easily be obtained, to that very end; for the well-affected in these parts desire it extremely, and the others laugh at them, for imagining the french will think of a peace with us, when they know we are no longer able to make war.

"I remember your majesty has often resolved to settle before the beginning of the parliament, what should be the funds which your servants should endeavour to get the money raised upon, for the ensuing year, and hitherto this could never be so agreed, as to be well pursued. However, I hope that will not discourage you from attempting the same method once more. I have nothing farther, but to wish your majesty long life, glory, and all happiness."

DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE EARL OF PORTLAND.

[Will return to London as soon as his health will permit—Wishes the king to see sir John Fenwick.]

"*Eyford, Oct.* 11-21, 1696.—My lord; I am extremely obliged to your lordship for your kind concern. You may be sure my own circumstances, as well as my duty to his majesty, will oblige me to make all possible haste to London; but at present any motion, more violent than gently walking in my chamber, immediately occasions my more than ordinary spitting of blood, and brings such a faintness on my spirits, that I am ready to swoon away. Having already this morning writ the inclosed letter to the king, which I desire the favour of your lordship to deliver to him, I find my breast so weak, that I dare say no more, but that I hope his majesty will have the curiosity himself to speak with sir John Fenwick, and, if possible, it were not amiss, he would remember what has passed this last year or two, as well as he does for four or five before. When he comes to the House of Commons, probably they may not be satisfied with hear-says of people he has had no commerce with, and no information against his acquaintance, but of things so remote, that they are most or all pardoned by the last act of grace."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.*

[Laments the weak state of his health, and desires leave to resign the seals.]

"*Eyford, Oct.* 18-28, 1696.—Sir; I have endeavoured to come to

* Printed also in Dalrymple's Memoirs.

London to receive your majesty's commands and directions, but by what happened yesterday, I find it is impossible for me, and in all appearance will be so for a long time. I am very sensible your majesty's affairs must necessarily receive great prejudice, by the absence of one in my post; and since it is very doubtful whether I shall ever so well recover this accident, as to be capable of serving in the station I have the honour to be in at present, and most certain it cannot be of a long time, I humbly and earnestly entreat your majesty will allow me to return the seals into your hands. Besides my incapacity upon this illness, I am sure, Sir, you must think it impossible for any man to serve in so nice an employment as your secretary, that has the misfortune to lie under the suspicion, though but of a few. I do not doubt but in my private capacity, I shall have occasions to demonstrate my fidelity and loyalty to your majesty. In the mean time I repeat my request, and beg leave to put you in mind of your promise at my receiving the seals, that I should be at liberty to return them, without your majesty's displeasure, whenever I found the place uneasy. Now, Sir, that it happens to be impossible for me to execute it, and for your disservice that I should, I hope you will accept this tender as designed with all duty to yourself, and affection to your government; for inclination, interest, self preservation, every thing that is valuable to an honest or reasonable man, oblige me to be what I sincerely am," &c.

REPLY OF THE KING.

[Affectionately dissuades him from resignation, and dispenses with his attendance.]

"*Kensington, Oct.* 20,* 1696.—I hope that the letter, in which you offer to resign the seals, is the effect of chagrin, arising from your unfortunate accident; as I am sure on reflection you must be convinced, that you could not have chosen a more improper time to execute such a design, as well on your account as on mine. I have, indeed, so great a regard for you, that were it in my power, I would never permit you to do what will draw on

* This date is evidently O. S., from the letter to which it refers.

you so much blame. I am fully sensible that your resignation would be injurious to my service, but I protest to you that on this occasion, I consider your interest more than my own; I hope, therefore, that on due consideration, you will think no more of it. Doubtless it is much to be wished that you could have been here before the opening of parliament, but I do not see that my service will suffer much by your temporary absence, which will enable you to attend to the re-establishment of your health. May God speedily restore it, that I may have the satisfaction of embracing, and assuring you in person of my sincere friendship, which is greater than you can imagine."

THE EARL OF PORTLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Combats his resolution of resigning.]

"*Kensington, Oct.* 20-30, 1696.—Sir; I was particularly concerned, on being informed yesterday, that in your attempt to return hither, the motion so greatly increased your malady, that you have been unable to continue your journey; but I must confess that my surprise was very great, on perceiving, by your letter of the 18th, that your intention is, to quit your office. I am not surprised that in your present seclusion, oppressed as you are with illness, the vexatious rumours spread by mischievous people should give you a great deal of uneasiness; but this ought not to affect you so far as to urge you to a step which would be prejudicial to your interest and your honour—pardon this expression from a man whom you have so kindly received into your friendship, after which you must allow me the liberty of speaking frankly on a point so important. I will say nothing of the loss you will occasion to the king's service in retiring; lord Galway will, as it appears, speak to you of it himself; but I intreat you, Sir, to reflect, whether you will not give your enemies occasion to say, that you retire in consequence of what sir John Fenwick has disclosed; and because the parliament will, perhaps, institute an inquiry on the subject. Should that happen, and should he not prove what he says, can you doubt that your friends have the will and the power to justify you strongly, from an ac-

cusation of which you are innocent. This being the case, what will become of the suspicion of the world, of which you justly complain? must it not vanish, and will not the injury devised against you, turn to your advantage, and to the confusion of its instigators? I beg that you will consider this well, and receive the advice of your friends. I am aware that you may say they advise you for their own sakes, as well as for your's; but observe Mr. Russell, who is in the same predicament; for he spontaneously takes the same part which we intreat you to take. Leave all to time and your friends, and think only of recovering from your accident, which of itself will occasion you but too much vexation. God grant that the aid of sir Thomas Mellington may relieve you, and accomplish your cure, which is the desire of," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Complains of the malice of his enemies—Conforms himself to the wishes of the king, but urges the expediency of his resignation.]

"*Eyford, Oct. 22-Nov.* 1, 1696.—Sir; If one could answer the reasons of your majesty's letter, it is impossible to resist the kindness and the manner of it. I therefore entirely submit myself to be disposed of as your majesty shall think best. I did, and do still apprehend, that though the malice and improbability of this story will be plain to many unbiassed people, yet with others there will still remain enough doubt and suspicion, to make so difficult a place as mine impossible to be executed among a generation of people, who are much better at finding faults than they are at mending them; and upon this account concluding that before long it would become necessary for me to retire, it would look very odd to keep the seals, whilst my health prevented my executing the office, and then quit them when perhaps I might grow better. But if this be judged by your majesty not a sufficient ground, I acquiesce, and will endeavour, as soon as possible, to wait on you myself, though, either by letter, or word of mouth, I despair that I shall ever be able to express with how much gratitude I am," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE EARL OF PORTLAND.

[Revived hopes of the Jacobites—Countenanced more than ever by the french court—Elated by the prospect of an invasion.]

"*Eyford, Oct.* 24-*Nov.* 3, 1696.—My lord; Having seen a letter from France, of a late date, that mentions fresh hopes and a new spirit in the late king's court; the person himself makes the remark, that this must proceed either from an assurance they have from the king of France, that he will make no peace with England, or from some prospect of invading us. He says the king of France was never more kind or civil to king James and his queen than now; that their court, which of late has been deserted, is now crowded with french nobility and foreign ministers. He tells a particular story, that my lady Tyrconnell* was near being sent to prison, for saying the king would own our king; that she was examined why she gave out such news, and having produced a letter from England, assuring her it would be so, she was not confined, but severely reprimanded, and told, a letter from England was not ground sufficient to spread such a report of a thing the king of France had often declared he would never do. The same letter hints, as if they had conceived some hopes in the french court, by the help of the pope and the duke of Savoy, to begin a private treaty at Turin, for a separate peace with the emperor and the king of Spain, which would bring it to a war of religion, which has long been designed by the bigot party: thus far as to what relates to the peace.

"As to the invasion, he gives no light; but I have a letter from Dunkirk, that says the marshal de Villeroy was expected there very soon, which is the same thing Mr. Boufflers did before they intended the last stroke; and by all the letters I see, both from Spain and France, Chateau Regnaud is not gone to the Straits;

* Harriet, daughter of Richard Jennings, esq., and sister of Sarah, countess, and afterwards duchess of Marlborough, espoused in second nuptials the earl of Tyrconnell, whom she accompanied to France, when he attached himself to the fortunes of his exiled sovereign.

so that methinks sir Cloudesley Shovell should not go out of reach of the king's orders, till it be known where that squadron is. A man that writes me accounts from St. Malos, a good while since, said he had something of the last importance to impart, which he did not dare do in the ordinary method. I sent to Mr. Jurieu, who manages that intelligence, that the man might be put in a way to disclose what he had learnt, but as yet I have not heard from him.

"I will make no remarks from my sick solitary chamber, but if your lordship will give yourself the trouble to shew this letter to the king, it will receive a right judgment, and you will oblige," &c.

DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE EARL OF PORTLAND.

[Hints at the revival of the assassination plot, and recommends the king to be careful of his person.]

"*Eyford, Nov.* 10-20, 1696.—My lord; I have just now received advice, which very much confirms what I have apprehended for some time, that there are fresh designs, both upon the king's person, and to invade the kingdom. Let us take care of the first, and the second will, I hope, be in no danger. The account I have is, that sir George Barkley is certainly in England, that he lately writ over for a ship to carry him off, but was bid that he was to stay and observe orders, and that king James hoped to be here soon; that sir George, with some few of those who were to attempt the assassination the last time, and remain still in England, are now again ordered to undertake it: that Mr. Carryl has lately writ to a correspondent, to give no credit to the peace, but be assured he should see him soon. For God's sake, my lord, beg of the king to take care of himself, and let him know this comes from a hand that I can depend on. I will endeavour to learn more particulars. Care should be taken to put the winter squadron in a good posture, for I am confident, when Chateau Regnaud comes back to Brest, and Ponti's squadron is ready, with the other ships, that are providing at Rochfort, and elsewhere, they hope to be masters for some time of the sea.

"I have many reasons, you will believe, to make me earnestly desire to be in town, but I cannot yet guess when I shall be able. I tried on Sunday to take the air in the coach, and in less than half an hour was seized with such a sickness in my stomach, that I was forced to return, and was indisposed all day after it. I would not trouble you with the relation of my health, but that the neglect of my duty at this time needs a more than ordinary excuse."

Sir John Fenwick failing to give the information which he had promised, and which was required as the price of his pardon, a resolution was taken to leave him to the usual course of justice, and two witnesses, named Goodman and Porter, were found to substantiate his guilt. Unfortunately, however, this purpose was frustrated by the escape of Goodman, at the very moment when the trial was about to commence, which rendered it necessary to proceed by attainder, and consequently to bring the subject before the cognizance of parliament. Many objections were, however, started, both to the publicity of such a proceeding, and to the principle itself; and it was not without the utmost reluctance that the king and cabinet adopted the resolution.

Preparatory to the introduction of the bill, the communications of Fenwick underwent a public scrutiny, and he was repeatedly examined by both Houses. His charges were, however, so vague and ill supported, and his prevarication so palpable, that after a solemn and elaborate investigation, they were voted false, malicious, and scandalous.*

As far as regarded his favourite minister, the king took a warm interest in the decision of the parliament, and greatly promoted it by his exertions. He evinced his confidence by continued proofs of favour and kindness, and found so much difficulty in supplying his place, that he over-ruled all his importunities to resign. No charge or insinuation ever weakened his affection; and when the investigation was concluded, he not only sent him a kind

* Additional lights will be thrown on this mysterious transaction, in the correspondence with the whig lords, Part 3.

message through the earl of Portland, but even honoured him with a letter, highly expressive of his esteem and solicitude.

THE EARL OF PORTLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.*

[Congratulates him on the termination of Fenwick's affair—Urges his return to London in the name of the king.]

"*Whitehall, Jan.* 20, 1696-7.—Sir; For some time I have not importuned you with my letters, since affairs have been in a state of uncertainty; and though I have never doubted, that they would assume a favourable aspect, I own I never imagined, that in your absence they would go on so well; but as all is now finished, entirely to your advantage, I could not delay congratulating you. Nothing is now wanting but your presence, and I hope your health will permit you to return. If contentment of mind contribute to bodily health, your's ought to allow you soon to undertake the journey. The king told me he intended to write to you, if he had leisure, but at all events he has ordered me to tell you, from him, that he wishes you could come soon, and would use your exertions to do so as soon as you could, Sir, without injury to yourself. I assure you no one will more rejoice to see you again, than, Sir," &c.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Congratulates him on the favourable termination of sir John Fenwick's affair—Wishes him to come to London.]

"*Kensington, Feb.* 18, 1696-7.—I have not written to you for a long time, as well because I was constantly apprised of the state of your health, which did not permit you to come to town, and with which I was deeply affected, as because I was conscious, that my letters could be of no other use, than to inform you of what occurred here, of which I knew you received exact intelligence, and which ought to have given you satisfaction, since every thing has passed so much to your advantage. To this I contributed as much as possible. At present, as the season of the year is so far advanced, and the severe cold is past, I hope your health will soon permit you to come to town.

"I assure you I am very impatient to see you again; and I perceive that your presence here is necessary for my service. I am therefore confident, that you will use your utmost efforts to come as soon as possible, and I shall have great pleasure in convincing you in person, of the continuance of my zealous friendship."*

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY IN REPLY.

[Acknowledges his majesty's kindness and confidence—Hopes to be able to repair to London in a short time.]

"*Eyford, Feb.* 20-28, 1696-7.—Sir; Though your majesty's letter of the 18th was sent by express from the office at five o'clock, the same evening, it came not hither till this day. I am extremely sensible of the kindness you have been pleased lately to shew upon my account; and though I have found more and better friends than I could reasonably expect, yet the chief cause of my success must ever be acknowledged due to your majesty's goodness, in owning me so particularly as you have done. It is impossible to express the uneasiness I have endured this winter at my being forced to be absent. I hope the weather and my condition will now mend, and I design, if possible, to attempt getting towards London, about the beginning of the next week after this that is coming in. I am sure, when I have the honour to wait on your majesty, I shall then be at a loss, as I am now, to express with how sincere and dutiful a gratitude I am," &c.

Although the health of the noble secretary was now sufficiently improved, to enable him to wait on the king in London, the same causes still operated to fortify his aversion to public life; for we soon afterwards find him again renewing his solicitations for permission to retire.

* As no farther reference is made to Fenwick in the king's letters, the details respecting his attainder and execution, and the sentiments of Shrewsbury on that occasion, may be found in the correspondence with the whig lords, Part 3, Chap. 2, 3, 4, and 5.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

"*Hyde Park, April* 19-29, 1697.—Sir; In the beginning of winter, after my first relapse, I had such reason to apprehend, that the circumstances of my health would not permit me in a long while, to execute the place of secretary, that I thought it my duty to beseech your majesty to receive the seals; but you were then pleased to command me to continue, and try what benefit I might receive from time, which I obeyed; and now, after six months experiment, find myself in a condition as weak, and more desperate than I have yet been, unlikely ever to recover, but very certain not to do it in many months. this unfortunate state of my health is the occasion of my renewing the same request to your majesty, and which I do the more earnestly, because otherwise, I am sure your business will suffer by my inability to attend to it, and because nothing but a considerable time of perfect quiet and leisure can give me the least hopes of overcoming such a kind of distemper. And though your majesty, in your great goodness, should dispense with my presence in town, and allow me to retire into the country, to follow my cure, yet, by experience, I well know the difference; for there is an anxiety of thought, and an impatience of mind that I can never shake off whilst I am sensible my master's business suffers by my absence. So that remaining under this burthen can be of no use, but at the same time to neglect your majesty's affairs, and destroy my own health. Many words, I am confident, Sir, will not be necessary, to obtain so reasonable a request. I shall therefore conclude this letter with assuring your majesty, that if (contrary to my own expectation) the utmost care and ease I can take should prolong my days, and restore my strength, they shall ever be zealously employed in your service. My obligations to your majesty are such as I can never forget; but, whether my life be long, or short, to my last moment I shall, with the strictest fidelity remain," &c.

CHAPTER 8.

1697—1700.

Measures adopted for the restoration of public credit—Continued distresses of the country—Successes of France in the Netherlands, Catalonia, and South America—Negotiation for peace—Accusation of Price, Chaloner, and others, against the duke of Shrewsbury, for endeavouring to favour the escape of sir John Fenwick—Exposure of their plot—The king again refuses to accept his resignation—Permits him to quit the post of secretary of state—Prevails on him to accept the staff of lord chamberlain—His final resignation, and departure for the continent—Correspondence from July, 1697, to July, 1700.

THE primary care of the parliament, which had assembled in October, 1696, was to remedy the deplorable state of public credit, and to provide means for supplying the deficiencies of the revenue. Under the able management of Mr. Montague, chancellor of the exchequer, the exchange of the new for the old coinage was gradually effected; and the national circulation restored to activity. In the interim, the want of a medium of traffic, and the necessities of the state, were supplied by an issue of three millions, in exchequer bills, which was a novel experiment in political economy. These securities, which bore a low interest, and were distributed by means of the Bank, were divided into such small sums as to answer the common purposes of trade. Thus the national circulation was gradually brought into its former course, the supplies were more readily raised, and public confidence and credit restored. Still, however, as this revolution could not be immediately accomplished, the necessity of peace was deeply felt, and the dangers and distresses which the country had encountered, called forth a general wish for the termination of a long and burthensome war.

No one more deeply deplored the distresses of the country than William himself, and however unwilling to forego his laudable

designs for the reduction of the french power, he felt the necessity of yielding to the exigency of the time, and the wishes of his people. He saw, that the defection of the duke of Savoy had shaken the stability of the grand alliance; and enabled the enemy to bring a superior force into the field; that the principal burthen of the contest would fall on the maritime powers; and that, notwithstanding every effort to establish public credit, the resources of England were too far exhausted, to afford adequate supplies for the maintenance of an active war. While, therefore, he concealed, as much as possible, the secret of his own weakness, and endeavoured to assume an imposing attitude, for the vigorous prosecution of hostilities, he continued to listen to overtures from France, and laboured to obtain the most favourable conditions of peace, which circumstances would permit.

After stimulating the parliament to new exertions, he left the government, as before, in the hands of lords justices, among whom was the duke of Shrewsbury; and on the 25th of April, departed for the continent.

From a consciousness of his diminished resources, he had in the preceding year opened a private negotiation with the french court, through the agency of Monsieur Callieres, who had been deputed to Holland by Louis the 14th, and the discussions had been conducted by Dykvelt, minister of the states general, and lord Villiers, who, in the preceding April had been appointed envoy at the Hague. At the present period the arrangement was so far matured, that a series of preliminary articles appears to have been adjusted.* In this stage of the negotiation, the military operations of the year commenced. While William was anxiously labouring to satisfy the emperor and the king of Spain, the king of France employed more potent exertions to vanquish their reluctance. On the side of the Netherlands he sent a powerful army under Villeroy and Boufflers, who invested Ath early in the season, and reduced it in the face of the allied army, commanded by William in person. But his chief effort was against Spain, for he dispatched a

* See the chapters on the negotiations for the peace of Ryswick, in Part 2.

force into Catalonia, which before the close of the autumn, reduced Barcelona; and at the same time directed an expedition under the command of admiral Pointis, against the spanish colonies, which captured Carthagena, and spread a general alarm through the provinces of South America.

The spirit of the court of Madrid, was broken by these accumulated disasters, and they now as earnestly pressed, as they had before deprecated the negotiation. This change in their disposition discouraged the emperor, from persevering in his attempts to protract the war, till the death of Charles the second, who was declining in health, should leave the spanish crown open to contest. After many struggles, therefore, to obstruct the progress of the negotiation, he reluctantly yielded to the general disposition of the other allies, sullenly acquiesced in the arrangements of William, and agreed to become a party in the negotiation.

As the duke of Shrewsbury chiefly resided in the country during this negotiation, we find little correspondence with the king on so interesting a subject. The first direct communication with the sovereign does not occur till the 22nd July, when Shrewsbury had made a temporary return to London. This letter is extremely brief, and merely imparts the news of the approaching peace.

"*Camp near Brussels, July* 12-22, 1697.—On taking leave of you, before my departure from England, I told you that I should not write to you, till you returned to London, in order not to divert your attention, when repose was necessary for the recovery of your health. I have now great pleasure in hearing that you are returned, and, as I am assured, in perfect health.

"No one, indeed, can more rejoice than I do, at this intelligence, being so much interested in every thing that concerns you, and having so great a friendship for you. To begin writing to you upon business, I can tell you news that will not be unpleasant to you, which is, that I believe peace is very near. As to particulars, you will learn them elsewhere;* and in a short time I shall be able

* Alluding to his correspondence with the earl of Portland, and the plenipotentiaries, who communicated the progress of the negotiation, for the peace of Ryswick.

to write to you more fully on the subject. But when one has to do with the french, one can be sure of nothing, till the affair is concluded. We must therefore prepare for war, as if we had no hope of peace."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Rejoices in the prospect of peace—Hopes proper care will be taken to prevent the french king from espousing the interests of king James at a future period.]

"*Whitehall, July* 20-30, 1697.—Sir; The honour of your majesty's letter of the 12th, is such a continuation of your goodness, after the many proofs I have already had, that I make it my first wish, that before I die, I may have some opportunity by my faithful services, to shew your majesty how truly grateful I am for your favours. You will believe, Sir, the likelihood of a peace is welcome news to me, who, for above a twelvemonth, have thought it necessary for your service. In the countries where I have been, it is so much wished and expected, that if the enemies should not prove sincere in their intentions, it would be proper the people's minds were weaned from these hopes, and disposed to contribute to the war, as well as their condition will permit. It is very happy, therefore, that the method your majesty has put the negotiation into, has brought the business to such a point, that the event cannot long remain uncertain. I must confess, the propositions which I have seen, made by the french, appear so near reason in all they mention, that I should think the agreement undoubted, if they have explained themselves fully and reasonably, relating to what immediately concerns your majesty, and these kingdoms. The king of France having made conscience and glory his pretences for carrying on this war, and for supporting the interests of the late king, one would wish, that such expressions might be used in the articles concerning that matter, as whether king James his name were mentioned, or no, might yet be so strong and so particular, that he should have no excuse to renew the one, or assist the other, without plainly forfeiting his word, and breaking his engage-

ments; which no reasonable man will be persuaded ought to be done, upon a motive of honour and conscience.

"When I came hither I thought myself perfectly recovered; but within these two or three days, I have had a little return of my shortness of breath, though I am lodged in the most airy place I could find in town. I hope it may go off again, and that nothing will interrupt my endeavours to serve your majesty, as becomes one, who has so many particular obligations, and is with so much zeal, and devotion, Sir," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Remarks on the articles of the peace—On the defect in the stipulations in regard to the king's title—Indicates the want of precise engagements for his successors in the throne.]

"*Whitehall, July 27-Aug. 6, 1697.*—Sir; I received by the last post, a letter from my lord Portland, which gave me great satisfaction, to understand the peace was in all probability so near a conclusion. In my answer to him, this night, I have taken the liberty to write my thoughts on the article dictated by marshal de Boufflers,* that I wished your majesty were named William the third, king of Great Britain, to avoid any cavilling interpretations hereafter. In this, I since perceive, my lord chancellor and lord chamberlain agree with me. I also hinted something of king James's removing farther from England, which I remember was formerly in your majesty's intentions. But what occasions this trouble is from another remark, in the same articles, which I think proper to be trusted to no other but yourself, that, if it proceeds from inadvertence, it may be mended, if from another reason, it may be buried in your majesty's breast, as I am sure my having taken notice of it, shall eternally be in mine. What I mean is, that in the article your majesty engages for yourself, and successors, to live in peace with the king of France; and he engages for

* This alludes to the meetings which took place between the earl of Portland and marshall Boufflers, in which the preliminary articles relating to England and France, were arranged. The letter to the earl of Portland appears in Part II, Ch. 8, dated July 27, O. S.

himself and successors to do the like to your majesty; but neither your majesty, nor the king of France, is bound by this article, as now penned, to live in peace with the successors of each other.* What I have said I hope is sufficient to make my meaning intelligible. If I have writ too much, I heartily beg pardon, and call God to witness, it proceeds from zeal to nobody but yourself, and that no creature living knows, or shall know, I have writ thus much; I am, Sir," &c.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Regrets his relapse—Is apprehensive that the french king intends to elude the acceptance of the preliminaries.]

"*Dieren*, 17-27 *August*, 1697.—It is impossible to be more concerned than I am, at the return of your former complaint. I hope the air of the country will completely restore you, and that on my return to England, I shall find you in perfect health, in which no one I assure you, is more interested than myself.

"Affairs here are at a great crisis. Next Friday is the day fixed by the french, for accepting their offer of peace, and by their conduct, it appears as if they were desirous the term should elapse; as they pretend not to have been instructed with regard to the surrender of Barcelona, and other conditions of less importance, which concern the spaniards, and without which, peace cannot be concluded. The unfortunate loss of Barcelona, at this particular time, as well as the escape of Pointis, may perhaps be the cause of this extraordinary conduct, on the part of the french, and may prevent the conclusion of the peace, which I thought certain. By next Friday's post you will be more clearly informed. May God restore your health; no one more sincerely wishes it than I do."

The anxiety which the duke of Shrewsbury experienced, in consequence of the accusations of Fenwick, did not cease with his

* The objections here stated are ably answered by the earl of Portland, in his reply to the letter of Shrewsbury, of this date, which will be found in the correspondence on the negotiation for the peace of Ryswick, Part II., Ch. 8.

execution; for at this period another tribe of informers commenced their machinations, and a new charge was brought forward. The principal agent in this scheme, appears to have been one Chaloner, a man of infamous character, long notorious as a coiner, and counterfeiter of Bank notes, and connected with a numerous tribe of similar miscreants. This man found a worthy associate in Price, the son of a welch clergyman, who had been apprenticed to an embroiderer in the city, but had equally relinquished all honest pursuits, and had narrowly escaped from justice, for forging the notes of the Bank of England. Price succeeded in introducing himself to sir Henry Colt, a well-meaning, but credulous gentleman, of considerable property and consequence; and having persuaded him, that he was intrusted by the Jacobites, to convey their communications to France, was employed as a spy, to give intelligence of their designs to government. Price soon contrived to gain the confidence of a few imprudent partisans of the Stuarts; and repairing to Dover, under a feigned name, formed an acquaintance with captain Roberts, who then lay under an accusation of favouring the escape of sir John Fenwick.

The attention he obtained, now encouraged him to take a bolder step. He not only communicated to sir Henry Colt, a pretended plot for the surprise of Dover castle, but in a letter, dated August 22, 1697, imparted a distinct and serious accusation against the duke of Shrewsbury. He stated, that he had held some conversation with one Mrs. Scott, who told him, that the duke was with sir John Fenwick some time before he left London, and that he had furnished him with a private pass, under his own hand. That one Gibbs had confirmed the information of Mrs. Scott. While at Dover he pretended to have learnt from Roberts, that lady Middleton had commissioned him to procure a vessel for conveying two gentlemen to France, whom he afterwards found to be sir John Fenwick and captain Waugh. Roberts, he added, had farther declared, that lady Middleton had invited him to repair to her house on the 2nd of June, when the duke of Shrewsbury would be there, to receive farther instructions. He accordingly went to Cardigan-house, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and saw sir John

Fenwick, captain Waugh, and the duke of Shrewsbury, with whose person he was well acquainted. Lastly, when Roberts was afterwards taken up, for his participation in this scheme, the duke had manifested much uneasiness during his examination, and appeared to feel great confusion at the presence of his dependent, Vernon.

This letter was sent to the duke by sir Henry Colt, with an offer of its suppression, from delicacy towards his grace. But Shrewsbury manfully disdained such a compromise, and insisted on its communication to the lords justices; adding, "I desire to conceal no action of this nature from their knowledge and examination."

These and other communications accordingly became the subject of a formal inquiry; and, after some preparatory investigation, Chaloner, Price, his servant Morris, Roberts, and others of their dupes, or associates, were taken into custody. The scrutiny opened a singular scene of prevarication and iniquity. Price and Chaloner, the two principal actors, in their separate confessions, vied in developing the infamous character and pursuits of each other. Price reluctantly admitted, that some of the pretended communications from the Jacobites were fictitious; while Chaloner declared, that he had dictated the letter written by Price; and both avowed, that their whole design was intended as a trick on the government, in order to procure rewards and obtain impunity for their trade of forgery and depredation. Mrs. Scott succeeded in evading pursuit, and Roberts denied the information imputed to him by Price, and disavowed any personal knowledge, either of the duke of Shrewsbury, or sir John Fenwick.

Sir Henry Colt himself at length became ashamed of his own credulity, in submitting to become the tool of such unprincipled wretches; and the lords justices, after a patient and impartial investigation, treated the plot with the contempt it deserved. The chief projectors afterwards underwent the punishment due to their multiplied crimes.

It would be irksome and disgusting to enter farther into the details of this scheme of iniquity, which, however absurd, yet deeply wounded the feelings of the noble secretary, while op-

pressed with disease and brooding over the malicious insinuations to which he had been exposed by the charges of Fenwick. He condescended, indeed, to vindicate himself, by proving, that the arrest of Fenwick was entirely owing to his vigilance; but the accusation sunk deep in his sensitive mind, and combining with other causes of dissatisfaction, prompted him to renew, with double warmth, his importunities for leave to resign.*

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Urges his indisposition as a motive for retiring—Wishes for the speedy return of his majesty to England.]

"*Eyford, Aug.* 25-*Sept.* 4, 1697.—Sir; It is impossible to be more truly grateful than I am for the honour your majesty does me in your favourable expressions of the 17-27th. I am sensible of your kindness, Sir, to a degree, that at this time makes me uneasy to reflect how useless a servant I am, to a master that deserves every thing from me; and how improbable a prospect I have of being ever again in a condition to do my duty. Within these two days my bleeding has stopped, but my shortness of breath continues so violent, and troublesome, that I take little rest, but as I sit upright in my bed; and if, in the free air I now breathe, I shall not be able to overcome this distemper, it is not hard to foresee what effect the fogs and smoke of London will have the next winter, since it is to that air (though in summer) that I must attribute my last relapse. I should not detain your majesty thus long upon so trivial a subject, did I not think it concerned your service to be informed of my circumstances, that you may have it in your thoughts, how to fill a place, that, by your positive commands, I have kept now near a twelve-month without being able to execute; and I am sure, you will not think it reasonable, or decent, that I should any longer make a sinecure of a secretary's office, which requires more assiduity than my best health could give.

---

* Mr. Vernon's correspondence in the latter part of 1697, and the letters of Price and sir H. Colt, with other documents in the Shrewsbury papers.

"The circumstances of the peace were in so critical a posture, at the coming away of the last letters, that the next post is expected with great impatience. Whatever the event of that treaty be, I hope your majesty will please to return to England, as soon as your affairs abroad will admit. In either case the parliament ought not to meet late in the year, and it will be absolutely necessary you should be here some days to dispose matters before their sitting; that time is quickly * by the order, and method your majesty's presence will put to your affairs.

"Pray, Sir, pardon the impertinence of retiring from business, in one line, and troubling you with it in the next; but, whenever I have an occasion of saying what I think may be for your service, my zeal will not let me be silent; and in all conditions of life I shall ever be the same that I am now, most faithfully," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Complains of the malicious accusations of his enemies, that he had favoured Fenwick's escape—Repeats his wish to resign.]

"*Sept.* 8-18, 1697.—Sir; Since I had the honour to write last to your majesty, an information has been given to the lords justices, that it was I contrived sir John Fenwick's escape, and had two hours conference with him before he went from London, that very time he was seized. Though sir John Fenwick's manner of using me may be a sufficient proof, that if I had been so much in his power, he would not have spared me; and that I have many witnesses, of which my lord archbishop and my lord chancellor are two, that I was privy to, and advised with them on the methods the people took, who did actually apprehend him; and who had, for some days before, engaged to me that he should be seized in the very manner he was; though these be such contradictions to this charge, that I have no imagination I can suffer in your majesty's, or in any body's opinion, upon so impossible an accusation; yet this may convince me of what I have long mistrusted, that I shall never be allowed to serve with advantage

* Illegible in the original.

to your majesty, or with quiet to myself, but be eternally embroiling your affairs with these sort of inquiries, and exposing myself to such an uneasiness as I am, of all mankind, the least fit, and the least able to bear. This, Sir, with the continuation of my ill health, which is such, that I have just now received a warning from sir Thomas Millington, and his opinion, that I shall not be in a condition to bear the town this winter, without a certain relapse, makes me once more earnestly renew my request to your majesty, that I may, either before, or at your return, resign the seals, and be allowed to serve you in such a private state as my health and circumstances will permit; assuring your majesty, that it shall be with the fidelity, zeal, and affection of one, who is very gratefully sensible of the many singular obligations he has received from you; and is, and ever will be," &c.

THE KING IN REPLY.

[Opposes his wish to resign—Exhorts him to despise the malicious accusations of his enemies.]

"*Loo, Sept.* 23, 1697.—If any thing could augment my concern for your illness, it is because you are always thereby induced to wish to resign the seals. I cannot consent to what is so contrary to my inclination and interest; and, as the peace is now signed, you may execute your office with very little trouble, and without always residing in London, if your health does not permit. I hope, on my return, to see you at Windsor.

"Is it possible, that you should be disturbed by the absurd accusations of the greatest knaves in the world. Believe me, you ought to be above it, for they can make no bad impression on any one; on the contrary, they will prove to your advantage; and you can have no idea of my impatience to see you, and how truly I regard you."

The first part of the ensuing letter from the earl of Portland relates to the conclusion of the peace, and is inserted in the correspondence on that subject. The second part is here introduced, as connected with the affair of sir John Fenwick, and contains a

strong remonstrance against the intention of Shrewsbury to withdraw from office; in corroboration of the arguments used by the king.

* * * * * * *

"*Loo, Sept.* 14-24, 1697.—I am surprised at the letter which you have written to the king. Is it possible, that a man of your capacity and rank can concern himself with what a tribe of knaves and forgers may lay to his charge, enjoying so much the confidence and good opinion of the king, whom I have acquainted with what Mr. Vernon has written of the examinations of these wretches. On the contrary, I speak sincerely; even if I had the intention of retiring, I would not do it, to give occasion to my enemies for saying, that I could not resist this accusation, of which the falsity is so evident, and which, indeed, destroys itself. Do not, however, withdraw from a situation which does not suit you, and from an employment which gives you too much trouble, till you have an opportunity of entering on another, which agrees better with your temper, and for which the king is entirely inclined. Every one will see, that a party of wretches and Jacobites charge you only for the purpose of casting suspicion on him whom they fear, and who is one of the most zealous supporters of the present government. For my part, if this should occur to me, I swear to you, that I should laugh at it, and you have cause to do the same. Think only of your health, and the rest will settle itself. I wish, my lord, we had the honour of your company here, where the air is very good; and I am persuaded, that contentment of mind, joined with it, would do you more service than all the remedies of the best physicians. I beg you to believe, that no one can love or esteem you more truly than I do."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Renews his importunities for leave to resign—Strongly recommends Mr. Vernon for a vacant place in the colonial establishment.]

"*Grafton, Oct.* 6-16, 1697.—Sir; I design to attend your ma-

jesty at your return to Kensington, and believe I shall be able to convince you, that it cannot be for your interest to continue a man in your service, whom people are resolved shall never be quiet; and, though the last accusation comes from such scandalous villains, and is upon a subject I can so demonstrably clear, that I am sensible the examination of it must turn rather to my advantage, than prejudice; yet this may satisfy anybody, that those who will endeavour to perplex your business, intend to do it through me; so that whilst there is an evidence to be hired in England, your majesty's business will not be easy, nor free from such sort of vexations: and, though every thing they can say to accuse my fidelity will be as false as this, yet it may not always be liable to the same demonstrable contradiction. What advantage, therefore, can it be to your majesty to keep a man in your business, upon such inconvenient terms, who, if these objections were removed, is unfit upon all accounts, but absolutely incapable, by reason of extreme ill health. The peace, which I hope will make your majesty's reign happy hereafter, as it does glorious now, has put your affairs in such a posture, that no interested man would choose this time to retire from your court; and I solemnly protest, I do it with no other prospect, than that I think it will ease your affairs, and that I myself have such ill health, and am so over-run with spleen and ill-humour, that I ought to avoid appearing in public, where I am sensible I shall make a much worse figure than I have ever yet done. I suppose I need say no more to convince your majesty how necessary it is to allow me the liberty I have begged; and in that obscure condition, I propose to live for the future, I shall endeavour to serve with such zeal, as may shew I am your majesty's, faithfully," &c.

"P. S. Having a very great compassion for Mr. Vernon's circumstances, who has a numerous family, and has lost his place in the prizes by the peace, and will now be out of employment in the secretary's office: I have writ to him upon it, and find his modesty such as would be satisfied with Blancard's place in Ja-

maica, which I hope your majesty will be pleased to grant him, for I am sure you have not a more faithful, and not many more capable servants, in this kingdom."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

[Again expatiates on the uneasiness of his situation, and renews his request for leave to retire.]

"*Kensington, Nov.* 18-28, 1697.—Sir; If I were able to make your majesty sensible—if I knew how to express the distraction of my own mind, since I have endeavoured to oblige it to conform to your majesty's commands, you yourself, Sir, would be convinced, that such a struggle, if it continues, can end in nothing, but in destroying the poor remains of my life, without being in any manner useful, or serviceable to your majesty. Between ill-health, spleen, and the disgusts I have received, and may reasonably expect to meet hereafter, from the villainous attempts of some, who, by false witnesses, and all other base means, are contriving the ruin of my reputation, I confess I have taken so violent an aversion to public business, that the very thoughts of continuing longer in it, is what I am not able to bear. And though my great deference for your majesty's presence, and commands, makes it very difficult for me to dispute what you personally order, yet I no sooner reflect seriously with myself, what it is I am engaging in, but I become sensible how impracticable it is, with such circumstances of health as I am in, and such a temper of mind. Since retirement, therefore, is the only course of life my bad constitution, and worse humour, will suffer me to lead, I earnestly beg, Sir, you will be so charitable to allow it me, with your favour, and that I may soon have the comfort to know I have this liberty, and do not offend," &c.

We find no answer to this letter; but, from other sources we discover, that his wish to resign was, at this time, over-ruled by the importunities of the king, on one hand, and the strong representations of the whig chiefs on the other; because the jarring views of the sovereign and the whigs could not be brought to

coincide, either in the appointment of his successor, or in a consistent scheme of administration;* and therefore his continuance in office was regarded by both parties as the only means to prevent a dissolution of the ministry. Influenced by this motive, he continued reluctantly to hold the seals, though hourly deploring the irreconcileable jealousies which increased among his friends, and the growing disgust of the king against the whigs. But, at length, the compulsory resignation of Sunderland presented an opportunity of retaining him in the public service, in a situation of no official labour, or political responsibility. Of this opportunity the king did not fail to profit, by offering him the vacant post of lord chamberlain. The offer was thus conveyed through lord Portland.

THE EARL OF PORTLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*January* 7-17, 1697-8.—Sir; You will, no doubt, be much surprised to learn, that lord Sunderland has left us, as you will see by his own letter.† I shall say nothing to you of his reasons, nor if any of them be good, as the affair is over; but I am persuaded, that you are as much concerned at it as myself. The king, Sir, has desired me to write to you on his part, to offer you the place, which is certainly, of all others, the most agreeable to your disposition; as it will not occupy you more than your health will allow, will not oblige you to return to court at this moment, and is, at the same time, the most honourable you can have. My sole apprehension has been, that you would not, perhaps, be very well pleased to enter upon a charge which he quits; but this ought to occasion you no scruple, since he himself is the first to intreat you very earnestly so to do. I hope, that your desire of retiring with a good grace from that of secretary of state, will at least urge you as much as my wishes, since there is no one in the world whom I so much desire to see in that place

* See the correspondence with the whig lords, Part 3, Chapter 5.

† See lord Sunderland's letter on this occasion and a more particular detail of the circumstances attending his resignation, in the correspondence with the whig lords, for December, 1697.

as yourself, Sir, whom I infinitely honour and esteem, and with whom I should take great pleasure in living as a true servant and friend. I entreat you to let me have your answer, and believe me to be ever," &c. &c.

Shrewsbury declined the office of chamberlain, but he could not resist the flattering importunities of his royal master and the solicitations of his friends; and consented to retain the seals, till some arrangement could be effected, which might restore the strength and consistency of government. Still, however, he did not desist from his purpose, and with great difficulty was persuaded to remain a nominal secretary, till the king's return from the continent. At length he absolutely repelled all farther importunities; and, on the meeting of the new parliament, extorted from his royal master the release, which he had so long solicited in vain. This favour he thus gratefully acknowledged, in a letter which was delivered by Mr. Vernon with the seals.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE KING.

"*Dec.* 10-20, 1698.—Sir; I cannot forbear giving your majesty this trouble, to return you my most sincere and humble thanks, for the compassion you have been pleased to have of me, in giving me leave to surrender the seals, which Mr. Secretary acquaints me you have done in so generous a manner, as not to appear angry at my retiring; though at the same time, you expressed yourself with such a kind partiality to me, as to imagine, I might be of some small use in your service, if not in the same employment, in some other. But, as every honest man will have a desire to do his duty both to his master, and the public, whilst he is in an office; so the uneasiness of being forced so long to neglect what I owe to both, is so fresh in my memory, that I cannot resolve to undertake another, whilst I am persuaded I have not health to execute it, in a decent manner. One can hardly expect a more convincing proof of inability, than what befell me lately, when I designed paying my duty to your majesty, at your arrival: and, if a man cannot bear the air of London four days in a year, he must certainly make a very scurvy figure in a court, as well as in

a ministry. Therefore, I hope, when your majesty is pleased to consider my circumstances, you will think what I do, not only reasonable with regard to myself, and my own reputation, but agreeable to that duty, and service, which I owe you, and which to the last moment of my life I will be ever ready to pay, being with as true a zeal and gratitude, as any person in your three kingdoms," &c.

But, notwithstanding his positive refusal to accept an office, the deplorable state of the administration, and the violence of parties which marked the first sessions of the new parliament, induced him at length to yield again to the importunities of the king. On the return of William from the continent, in October, 1699, he was accordingly appointed lord Chamberlain, though he received the staff with reluctance, and considered himself as a mere cipher, selected to fill the post, in order to prevent farther contention.

At this period his epistolary intercourse with the king was suspended, and we must therefore refer to the portion containing the correspondence with the whig chiefs, for an account of his situation and sentiments, in the momentous crisis, when the contests between the whigs and tories threatened the ruin of the country, and the subversion of the throne. His weak frame and timid mind were shaken by the anxiety arising from these storms of faction; and we find him at one time vehemently importuning for retirement, and at another yielding to the solicitations of his royal master, to take a part in the different schemes, which were suggested for the formation of an efficient ministry. He was successively offered the posts of lord treasurer, governor of Ireland, and groom of the stole, and lastly, his choice of any employment under the crown. The government of Ireland,* in particular, was strongly

* These offers are thus commemorated in the Journal, kept during his stay abroad. "*May* 18, 1702.—Yesterday I had a letter from lord Godolphin, to tell me the queen would keep the place of master of the horse for my return. Now, I have almost been offered all the great places of the kingdom, since I quitted secretary: once chamberlain; king William once offered me to be lord treasurer; often to be president and privy seal; to be governor to the duke of Gloster; and last, to be lieutenant of Ireland, and groom of the stole at the same time."

pressed on his acceptance, conjointly with the vacant office of groom of the stole; and he once so far submitted to the necessity of the times, as to express a faint acquiescence in the offer. But he was soon discouraged, by the failure of all his attempts to restore harmony between the king and the whigs; and so much agitated by the struggle between his political fears, and his anxiety to gratify his sovereign and friends, that his health was severely injured, and he earnestly renewed his solicitations, for an absolute release from all public cares. The king at first treated his application as the result of spleen, and hoped to divert him from his purpose by a letter of raillery. On the representations of Mr. Vernon, he, however, changed his design; and not only expressed a sincere sympathy in his sufferings, but gratified him with a kind and gracious approval of his earnest wishes.

THE KING TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Hampton Court, 22nd May*, 1700.—With great concern I hear that, notwithstanding all the remedies you have taken, you cannot stop the effusion of blood, which you very much attribute to the uneasiness of your mind, on account of my wish, that you should go to Ireland, and to which you do not feel yourself equal. I assure you I will not press you in any thing, but will leave you entirely at liberty, merely desiring you to attend to only the re-establishment of your health, and should it permit you, I shall be happy to see you here before I go to Holland, about the time I told you, when you went from hence.

"I hope you are well convinced of my friendship, and that you can easily judge, how sensibly I am affected by hearing of your illness. May God soon perfectly restore you."

The monarch thus kindly desisted, not only from a purpose, which he seems to have had long and earnestly at heart, but finally accepted the staff of chamberlain; and permitted his favourite minister to withdraw entirely from public life. The duke transmitted his key of office, through the hands of his friend Mr. Vernon, then secretary of state, who, in two letters to his noble patron,

gives an interesting account of the gracious and feeling manner, in which his resignation was accepted.

"*June* 22-*July* 2, 1700.—I did not write to your grace by last post, since you were like to be from home till next week. I was that day at Hampton Court, and read your letter of the 17th to his majesty, whose answer was, that he could not say he was well pleased with your renouncing all employments, and particularly if you would have gone for Ireland, it would have been of great use to his service, and at Dublin you would be freed from the disquiets people in the ministry are exposed to here; but he said, he was fully satisfied of your good intentions, that as he was always disposed to be kind to you, so he knew you would not be guilty of ingratitude. He believed you would do all you could to keep your friends in temper, but he questioned whether you would be able to prevail with them. He remembered you always preferred moderate ways, and endeavoured to bring others to it; but, he could give twenty instances where people's obstinacy were too hard for your advices; and he could not persuade himself you would have more power out of employment, than being in it. He rather feared you would give yourself up to the ease of a country life, and be unconcerned at what others are doing. I have hardly omitted any thing of what his majesty said on this occasion, by which you will see his majesty wishes he could have retained you in his service; but if you can make him amends, by taking your own way, he will forget all disappointments, and be pleased you should follow your own method, whether in business or out of it."

"*June* 25-*July* 5, 1700.—I delivered your key to his majesty on Sunday morning. He said he heard, that my lord Wharton made a triumph, that they had prevailed with you to quit every thing. I told him, more of those reports would run about, than were fit to be heeded; that you would never differ in the account you had given of the reason for your resigning. He said, he made no doubt of your integrity and affection. He was satisfied you would do all you could for his service and quiet; but, he still doubted how

far you could influence others to be of your mind. The next day the key was given to my lord Jersey."

Still, however, wearied with repeated importunities, and disappointed in his various efforts to restore harmony in the administration, Shrewsbury formed the resolution of retiring to the continent; and his purpose was strengthened by the dread lest the domestic feuds should terminate in a civil war, or produce a new revolution. He lingered in England several months, either to observe the contentions of parties, or to arrange his private affairs. On the return of the king from Holland, he obtained the royal permission to travel, and passed the evening of the 28th of October, at Hampton Court, in close conference with the king, a step which exposed him to the suspicion of having advised the change of ministry, which was then in agitation. The imputation, however, appears to have been groundless; for the duke had previously declared his decided disapprobation of many measures adopted by the king, and no less strongly, his determination to abstain from any farther share in the contentions of the day. After taking an affectionate leave of his sovereign, he quitted London on the 1st of November, and on the 4th landed at Calais. He reached Paris on the 19th November, N. S., and paid his respects at Versailles, to the king of France, who, as he says, received him "*tolerably civilly*." Short, however, as was the term of his visit at court, he did not escape some importunity from the friends of the abdicated monarch. He thus relates the incident: "Nobody was so perfectly civil as my old acquaintance, the duke of Lauzun, for he began to tell me how kindly king James had always taken the civility I had shewn him, when I was sent on the message; and was grounding upon this some farther discourse, when I cut him short, and told him I confessed I had great compassion at that time for his circumstances, but desired that we might not discourse on that, but on any other subject. An hour after, he took occasion to commend the prince of Wales; and wished that, by any means, I might have an opportunity of seeing so fine a youth. I told him I questioned not his merit, but had no great curiosity.

But if I must see him, I would much rather it were here than in England. This reply dashed all farther discourse of this kind, though he continued extreme civil, walking with me all the time; invited the ambassador and me to dinner, and offered all civilities there, at Paris, or at Montpellier."*

After a short stay of four days at Paris, the duke of Shrewsbury proceeded to the south of France, and on the eighth of December established his residence in the vicinity of Montpellier. He remained there little more than three months, and departing for Geneva, spent the summer in that city. In the commencement of September, he traversed the Alps into Piemont, and taking the route through Susa, reached Turin on the 5th. From thence, after a stay of only three days, he continued his journey through Genoa, Lucca, Pisa, and Florence, and arrived at Rome on the 20th of November, 1701.

The retreat of a nobleman so much beloved by the king, so generally respected by men of all parties, and so highly endowed with personal and mental accomplishments, did not fail to occasion numerous speculations and conjectures. Some have supposed that he was more deeply implicated in the intrigues of the Jacobites than he ventured to avow; others, that his indisposition was merely political, and affected as a plea for withdrawing from a responsible post at a period when he expected the Stuarts would regain the throne. From the first charge, we think he may be fairly acquitted; but it is not improbable that his fears of a counter-revolution, and his abhorrence of party warfare, co-operated with the effects of bodily infirmity to drive him from his country, particularly when we consider the timidity inherent in his character, and the troubled circumstances of the times.

* Journal of the duke of Shrewsbury.

PART II.

No. 1.—Correspondence with admiral Russell, in 1695, 1696, and 1697.

No. 2.—Correspondence with the earl of Galway, in 1695 and 1696.

No. 3.—Correspondence on the negotiations for the peace of Ryswick, in 1696 and 1697.

PART II.

CHAPTER 1.

1694.

Naval operations—Intended attack on Brest—Motives which induced the king to dispatch a fleet into the Mediterranean—Junction of the Toulon and Brest squadrons—Departure of admiral Russell—His proceedings in the Mediterranean—Compels the french to retire to Toulon, and saves Barcelona—His disputes with the spaniards, and jealousy of the dutch—Directed to winter in the Mediterranean—His objections and opposition combated by the duke of Shrewsbury—Complains of the king's parsimony and inattention to his services—Correspondence from May, 1694, to January, 1695.

IN the correspondence between king William and the duke of Shrewsbury, the project for sending a fleet to the Mediterranean, and the objections of admiral Russell to winter in that sea, occupy a prominent place. These subjects are still farther developed, in the letters which passed between the duke and the admiral himself; and this correspondence, which has hitherto be enentirely unknown to the public, will throw a new light on that important branch of the war. It will shew the consequences attached to the mastery of the Mediterranean, by the protection of the British trade, the preservation of Spain, and the maintenance of the duke of Savoy and the other princes of Italy, in the interests of the grand alliance. Collaterally, it also presents an instructive and curious picture of the naval service at that period; and it furnishes an additional proof of the mortifications and restraints to which the king was reduced to submit, from the great, but froward leaders, who had assisted in effecting the revolution, and on whom he now depended for the support of his throne.

In proportion as the war extended, the greatest efforts were made by the belligerent parties; and the naval operations assumed

a more imposing aspect. The chief object of the french court being, to conquer or intimidate the spaniards, and awe the princes of Italy, their principal attention was directed to the Mediterranean, where they pressed the siege of Barcelona. Hence they formed the design of uniting the fleets of Brest and Toulon, and with this combined force, to threaten the coasts of Spain and Italy, while their powerful army pursued its progress by land.

The private views which the french monarch was known to entertain on the spanish succession, the conviction that he was tampering with the duke of Savoy, the discouragement which the defection of Spain would have spread among the members of the grand alliance, were the weighty motives which induced king William to endeavour to prevent the junction of the two hostile squadrons from Brest and Toulon; and when that failed of success, to send a fleet into the Mediterranean, and to press the execution of this plan, in despite of the timid counsels of the cabinet, and the more vigorous opposition of Russell himself.

With this design was connected the expedition against Brest, already mentioned in the preceding correspondence. Had the french fleet been baffled in their attempts to put to sea, this enterprise would probably have assumed a more important character; but after that disappointment, it only contributed to obstruct the departure of the fleet to the Mediterranean, and when actually undertaken, the means of attack were so inadequate and so tardily brought into action, that both the minister and the admiral perfectly concurred in anticipating a failure. The event unfortunately justified their forebodings.*

Early in the Spring, preparations had been made for fitting out an efficient fleet; but, from the dilatoriness of the admiralty, Russell was not ready to put to sea before the french had quitted the harbour of Brest, and proceeded to the Mediterranean. Unable, therefore, to prevent the junction of their two fleets, he made a short cruize, in which he destroyed some merchant ships in Conquet Bay, and then returned to St. Helens, to accelerate

* See Part I., Ch. 3.

the departure of the expedition which was preparing against Brest. The arrangements for this unfortunate enterprise being matured, the combined fleet again put to sea.

The squadron destined for the attack on Brest, under lord Berkley, separated at the mouth of the Channel, and Russell, with the grand fleet, proceeded on his course to the Straits. He was joined on his way by admiral Neville, with the British squadron stationed at Cadiz, and the dutch admirals, Callemberg and Evertzen; and thus found himself at the head of sixty-three ships of the line. With this fleet he steered directly for Barcelona. The french admiral Tourville, who commanded the combined squadrons, retired to Toulon on his approach, and the siege of Barcelona was raised. But, notwithstanding the exultation produced by this unexpected relief, Russell found the spanish affairs in the most deplorable condition. Their fleet amounted to no more than ten sail, and of these, only four were ships of the line. The army was reduced to a state equally weak. It scarcely exceeded 9,000 men, ill paid and without clothes, provisions, or artillery, and the maritime towns were so destitute of protection, that the inhabitants had no other resource than flight, when the french squadron appeared off their coasts.

In such circumstances, it was natural that endless disputes should occur between the British admiral, and the timid and impoverished court of Madrid; and that the gratification derived from success, should be blended with the chagrin arising from the unreasonable demands, and inefficient measures of that power, whom he had rescued from destruction. These untoward circumstances were aggravated by the dilatory and improvident conduct of the British admiralty, and the inability of the Treasury to furnish the requisite supplies, as well as the selfish and limited policy of the dutch. To add to his mortification, the temper of the admiral was soured by ill-health, by the extent of his expenses, which were not adequately repaid, by his jealousy of his dutch colleagues, and his suspicions that the king was not sufficiently disposed, to appreciate and reward his sacrifices and services.

In this difficult crisis we find the duke of Shrewsbury acting the part of a patriotic and discerning statesman. He employed in the public cause, the influence of that intimate friendship, which had long subsisted between him and admiral Russell. He laboured to obviate difficulties, to remedy deficiencies, to soothe the captious spirit of the admiral, and to allay that irritation and disgust which his splenetic effusions excited in the mind of the king. Indeed, to the beneficial result of his mediation, we may principally ascribe the accomplishment of this arduous service, and the advantageous effects with which it was accompanied.

These brief hints will suffice, to explain the peevish tone which reigns in the letters of admiral Russell, and will develope the causes of those incessant complaints which Shrewsbury was perpetually employed in combating.

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Anticipates the failure of the attack on Brest.]

* * * * * * *

"*Britannia, St. Helens, May* 3, 1694.—I am afraid these two designs, Brest and the Straits, will hinder one another, and may make neither effectual; but my utmost endeavours, diligence, and care shall not be wanting. I have no very good prospect of success on Brest, that is, if the ships are gone from Brest water. I do not see any considerable service can be done with that small number of men; besides, in all probability, it will be very late before any thing can be attempted, since all the bomb vessels, store ships, and great part of the provision ships are still in the river; and those all detained with this wind, which blows extremely hard. But I have kept you too long. God bless you, and send us a happy meeting. Pray, at your leisure hours, let me hear from you; and give me your advice in what you think I want it."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[Prides himself on his friendship—Is apprehensive that the two expeditions against Toulon and Brest may obstruct each other—Considerations on the plan which it may be advisable to pursue.]

"*May*, 5-15, 1694.—I often please myself with the thoughts that if there is a man in the world, on whose friendship I can depend, it is dear Mr. Russell's, which, I assure you, I esteem it so good a fortune of my life, that I should omit no occasion in my power to improve it, and hope you believe I am as sincerely true to you, as I can wish you should be to me.

"I have long apprehended, that these two designs* will interrupt and spoil one another. I am not enough instructed in what can or cannot be done at Brest, to give a judgment upon that matter; but I doubt if, after the resolutions have been taken for the Mediterranean, and the instructions you have received thereupon, any great prejudice should happen to that service by delay, people would be apt to impute the faults to you, unless you have positive orders to warrant you in it. If you should go before Brest, and find that squadron not gone yet to the Mediterranean, I suppose you would think it advisable to spend a little time, if any thing could be attempted upon them, either by your ships alone, or with the assistance of the land forces; but I cannot tell, even in that case, whether you might not think it reasonable to make some detachment which, joined with Neville's ships, might be in a condition to keep their Toulon squadron from giving any assistance to the besieging a spanish sea-port town, which the french in Catalonia seem to aim at. But that which I think most likely to be the case, is, that the Brest squadron will be gone for the Straits before you come thither, and then, in my poor opinion, all possible haste should be made to follow them. If any thing can be done upon the great ships that are laid up at Brest (which I much doubt), it may be attempted with as good

* The design on Brest, and the project of sending a fleet to the Mediterranean.

success by the landmen, and a part of the fleet, as with the whole fleet."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[Anxiety of the king that he should follow the fleet to Toulon, and leave the enterprise on Brest to be executed by a division of his force.]

"*Whitehall, May* 19-29, 1694.—Sir; This morning I received a letter from the king, dated from Loo, the 14th of this month,* which discovers so much impatience for your following the Mediterranean fleet, that he is pleased to recommend it to me, though not in my province, that you should know his desire, that that service be in the first place considered; and that the execution of the design upon Brest be committed to the squadron you leave behind. I must only add, that it is the expectation and the wish of all that are concerned with the government here, that you would lose no time in following them to the Straits. The letters from Paris of the 21st of this month report Palamos to be then besieged, and that Barcelona was soon to follow. It is in great haste that I write these few lines, believing that it may be no disservice to you to know his majesty's mind, as well as the disposition of this whole cruise, not at all mistrusting, however, that you would lose any time which could be gained in the prosecuting this service. I will say no more, but wish you as good success as you had this day two years."†

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Bitterly complains that the delay in fitting out the ships was likely to frustrate the pursuit of the enemy—Censures the Treasury for neglecting to pay the fleet—Boasts of his own diligence, and describes his arrangements.]

"*Britannia, St. Helens, May* 24-*June* 3, 1694.—My lord; When I came to St. Helens, your kind letter was brought me, which I had designed, before now, to have returned my thanks for; but really I had so much business relating to the public, that I have hardly

* See this, and the subsequent letters, in the correspondence with the king, in 1694.

† Alluding to his victory off La Hogue.

had time to sleep. Yesterday came to me your grace's letter of the 23rd,* in which you are so kind to tell me what the king wishes and expects. I am under the same fear and apprehensions he is in, that we shall come too late to prevent the mischief the french design on any part of Catalonia, as also to annoy their fleet; for, if they be gone into Toulon, I do not know that port enough to make any conclusion of what can be done; but this delay must lie where it ought, on *that driveller, the general of the ordnance;*† for had his bomb vessels and stores been here, they might have gone when I first went out, which was a time so advantageous to the design, that the person I sent to Brest, who came to me the 6th of May, assured me, in Brest, besides the militia of the town, there were only two companies of regular troops. I leave you to judge, had we gone at that time, what confusion most people must have been in, and how great a probability there had been of good success: though I cannot absolutely acquit the Treasury, in their part of the delay; for when I went to sea, the ships I took with me only were paid; and though, probably, had I carried the fleet to sea unpaid, no ill-consequence would have come of it, as to mutiny; but what must the clamour have been, after a solemn declaration that the fleet should be paid at the Buoy of the Nore, before they sailed, and drilling them to Portsmouth, to which place vast numbers of the seamen's wives, children, and parents, had resorted, in order to receive their pay? The disappointment would not only have undone thousands of families, but begot such an odium, and made such a clamour all over England, that it would have been hardly possible to have retrieved it. I foresaw this inconveniency, and therefore often reminded the king, in the winter, at the committee of council, that care might be taken to have the fleet paid in time. I will not say where it stuck, but it is not hard to guess; and pranks of this kind will, some time or other, besides disappointing of services designed, put you to greater hazard, if not looked into;

* The letter of the 23rd was only a repetition of the duke's former letter of the 19th of May.

† Lord Sydney.

for, as the navy of England is the most certain security to the country, so it is a service neglected till every petty thing is provided for.

"But to the present business: taking it for granted (and as it is really true) that I could not sail to the Straits, with the ships that went out first with me, not only that the ships were not proper, nor of strength enough, nor provisions to support them when there, nor any orders to the dutch, it must be concluded, that I have made all the haste I could to return to join these; and since I came, which was on Tuesday noon, found the men embarked, I so ordered the matter *with my diligence* (if I may say so) that by Wednesday night the men were disembarked, and put aboard the proper ships; the rest watered and victualled, and I had sailed this morning, being Thursday, had the wind been fair, or the weather moderate. I designed to have tided it to the westward; but it is now a storm of wind at S. W., with much rain; but I will certainly sail the very first slatch of wind, or fair weather, for I am as impatient to be gone, as the king can be to have me; for were I not in hopes, that some service might be done, I am far from being delighted to make such a journey. But I know you believe I will do my utmost, and therefore trouble you with the account, that you may know how the whole matter stands, not that I apprehend I lie under any suspicion with you that I would neglect a moment's time."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[Has communicated his letter to the king and queen—Repeats his instances for the pursuit of the enemy into the Mediterranean.]

"*Whitehall, May* 26-*June* 5, 1694.—Sir; By last night's post, I sent your letter to his majesty, and something from myself, to put him out of doubt that you would make no delay, that was not absolutely necessary. I have, this morning, read to her majesty some of the passages of your letter to me, which have, I hope, convinced her, that you have, and will use, all the expedition possible, to pursue the service you design. I do not, in the least, doubt but you observe, in what I quoted of the king's

letter to me,* in my last to you, that he is not willing the Mediterranean service should suffer any delay by attending upon that of Brest; and if it were possible to meet with the french fleet upon the coast of Catalonia, before they had effected what they propose there, I should hope this campaign might be as advantageous to England as your last was, which I am sure is heartily wished by," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[Laments the death of general Talmash.]

"*Whitehall, June* 14-24, 1694.—The particulars of what we have done, and what we are to do, I leave to Mr. Secretary Trenchard, and others, that are men expert in relation, but cannot deny myself the weakness to lament with you the loss of poor Mr. Talmash.† I have no prospect of any service in the channel that gives me great comfort, so that our hopes are only upon you, to make amends for other misfortunes and miscarriages, and if that prove unsuccessful, I doubt we must expect a difficult campaign in winter."

Being retarded by contrary winds, the admiral did not reach the coast of Spain till the beginning of July, and his first proceedings are thus detailed in two letters, one to Mr. Secretary Trenchard, and the other to the duke of Shrewsbury.

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO SECRETARY TRENCHARD.

"*On board the Britannia, July* 1, 1694.—Sir; Though my passage was not very favourable, yet I have no reason to complain, having been, since I parted with my lord Berkeley‡ till I came upon my rendezvous, west 15 leagues from cape Spartell, twenty-three days; and, though in my passage we had a great deal of ill-weather, and contrary winds, yet no other accident attended us, but the two ketches that tended on my own ship

* See the correspondence between the king and the duke of Shrewsbury.

† The general who commanded the unfortunate expedition against Brest.

‡ Commander of the squadron sent against Brest.

foundering at sea, with a great quantity of water, which has a little disappointed me. When I came the length of the Rock of Lisbon, I sent the Mary and Adventure to Lagos; and in case they heard nothing of the french being between that place and Cadiz, the Adventure was then to proceed to Neville, in order to join me in the aforementioned station, which he did the 30th past, with eight english, and vice-admiral Callemberg with eight dutch ships; so that we are now, together, sixty-three ships of the line.

"The spaniards came to sea the same night they did, with nine sail, but as yet I have not seen them. I hear the french are seventy men of war, and that they lie in a line from Alfaques to Barcelona. I will not lose one moment's time to get to them, that if they design to stay for us, as I suppose they will, if they be the number reported, we may soon come to a deciding blow, that when all are killed that are to be killed, the rest may return home, before cold weather and Michaelmas storms come in, which I apprehend for these three-deck ships."

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*July* 1, 1694.—My dear lord; I have nothing to add to what I send you inclosed. I believe the french will try their fortune with us in these seas, if their number be as reported. Surely, a short time, with a fair wind, will put it to the trial, and then I may hope to be coming home again. It is a very pretty thing to be an admiral; but I really think, to have three kingdoms at one's disposal, after one year's fatigue at sea, is not a reward to a man that can live ashore, and has no ambition to be great. Pray God bless you, and send us a happy meeting, and then I will tell you my mind more at large."

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Barcelona, Aug.* 3-13, 1694.—Ten thousand thanks to you, my dear lord, for your kind letter. I wish I were able to give any hopes of success in these seas, as you desire; but the french will not let me see them, and I dare not venture to attack them

at Toulon: by what I can inform myself, the place is too strong; and a mortification or repulse would be of very ill-consequence. With probable hopes of success, I would venture a great deal; but the time of the year obliges me not to spend much time: besides, the dutch have provision only for the month of September. I have promised to spare them 4 days provision, to prevail with them to stay some few days longer; otherwise, we must have come away after seeing the town of Barcelona. I do not know what winter campaign we shall make, but I assure you mine this summer has been very troublesome; and, I suppose, I shall be blamed for not fighting the french whether they will or no. I am very sorry for poor Talmash; but, before I left him, I foresaw what would happen, both as to the success, and his own life. He is now dead, but I never saw a man less cut out to order such a business in my life.

"I long to be rid of this troublesome affair. I have neither head, body, nor temper to undergo all I do. Pray God bless you, and send you all you wish and desire, and that I may have the good fortune to see you at Christmas."

The failure of the expedition against Brest rendered the king doubly anxious to counteract the designs of the french in the Mediterranean, not only to retrieve the honour of the British flag, but to rescue Spain, and dissipate the alarms which had seized the princes of Italy. Accordingly, he sent instructions to the queen, directing that orders might be immediately issued, enjoining the admiral to pass the winter in the Mediterranean. This arrangement was considered as so irksome to Russell himself, and at the same time so hazardous, in the existing state of naval service, that the duke of Shrewsbury accompanied the official dispatches with a letter of apology; and the committee of the cabinet ventured to frame the instruction in such terms, as left its fulfilment to the discretion of the admiral. But the king was no sooner apprised of this alteration than he repeated his commands, in such a manner as to preclude the slightest modification. These

proceedings form the subject of three letters from the duke of Shrewsbury.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

"*Whitehall, Aug.* 4-14, 1694.—Sir; The letters which will come to you with this packet, are of the greatest moment to yourself and to England, of any that perhaps ever came to your hand. The state of the whole nation is so exactly laid down, I do not question, in Mr. Secretary's letter,* I will not trouble you with repetition, but only desire, that, in your determination, you will take care to lay aside all the partiality that is natural to a man's returning home, after being so long absent, and so full of the spleen, as your's of the first of July shews you to be. The first and chief consideration is, to take care of England, and that fleet that is to protect it against the great misfortune. If you think it can be done, and remain at Cadiz, it will, no doubt, be very glorious to interrupt all the king of France's designs this autumn, in the Mediterranean, and ride, the next summer, master of both seas, as you have done this; whereas, if you come away, he will put in execution, after your departure, whatever he intended, and perhaps fright the spaniards into a separate peace."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

"*August* 14-24, 1694.—Contrary to what I expected, the letters penned here, by the advice of the committee, are sent by Mr. Secretary to Mr. Blaithwayt. His majesty, I perceive, has given a positive order for your stay in those seas, and at the same time, Mr. Blaithwayt, in a letter to the queen, says, the king gives the orders positive, only to take you out of difficulties that a doubtful order would expose you to. However, this use has been made of the explanation in Mr. Blaithwayt's letter, directly contrary to the king's orders, to get the queen's instructions

* This letter from secretary Trenchard to admiral Russell, containing the official orders for his continuance in the Mediterranean during the winter, is missing.

penned with more latitude; for it would be a dismal thing if the fate of England and its fleet should depend upon your returning, and that you should be tied up to the ruin of us all, by the too great strictness of the order; for, by what his majesty has done, in going far beyond any advice, and making your orders positive, it is not hard to discover his inclination. And since the crossness of the winds has so long delayed your voyage, that it will be but just possible for you to look into the Mediterranean, if you return this year, and then leave Spain, that sea and trade, to the mercy of the french, without having had any success, and exposing your fleet, in some measure, by your return in the autumn, I must deal freely with you, that unless your reasons for your coming home be very obvious and strong, it is what will be imputed by many to a desire of seeing England, and not at all relish with the present humour of the nation, who have looked so much to the benefit of being masters of the sea, that I hope they will, this winter, more than formerly, employ their thoughts and purses to the increasing power and strength that way.

"I think it is of use to you, plainly to acquaint you with the inclinations of people here, but at the same time you are the best judge, and, as I said in my last, I shall so entirely depend upon your opinion, that I shall not only endeavour to support, but shall think whatever you do, best, because I know you design and can judge right, and so, dear Mr. Russell, believe me sincerely," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

"*Aug.* 26-*Sept.* 5, 1694.—Though by your letter of the 3rd, I find you are not in a very good humour, I doubt the orders you have received since will put you in a worse. The doctrine you used to preach to me, that public good ought to be considered before private ease, will now come to your share to practise, in a more tedious and troublesome manner than you could foresee. Whether your stay this winter, at Cadiz, will be advantageous to the common cause, may bear many arguments, for and against, which having been laid before his majesty, he is come to so posi-

tive a resolution for your continuing, that, by a letter I have from him, of the 20th of this month, I find he is in pain, lest the liberty the queen gave in her instructions, that, upon great necessity, you might return, should too much encourage you to do it. He has, therefore, renewed his commands to me to signify to you the importance of your stay; and I am sure you will so well understand his intentions, by this, as not to disagree, if there be a possibility of obliging, without the ruin of the fleet. I have but this more to beg, that if the orders his majesty has sent, be contrary to your opinion or inclinations, that may not so put you out of humour, as not to prosecute them in the most advisable and best manner. It is certainly a counsel of some hazard, but if it succeed, without ill accident, will be so troublesome to the french, and is apprehended at this time, as such, by the court of France, that nothing is more likely to put a happy end to this war, and give us an opportunity of being quiet, as I think both you and I desire

"Dear Mr. Russell, let a man that truly loves and values you, prevail upon you to practise patience and submission; and if his majesty is in the wrong in his commands, do your represent what you please; but then obey them, with a prudence you can be master of, if you please. Advice is a thing, you know, against my temper to trouble people with; part of this is by command, but much the greatest, out of a real concern I have for you and your credit, being what I hope you believe, and will ever find, sincerely," &c.

REPLY OF ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[Peevishly complains of the orders he has received from the king.]

"*Malaga, Sept.* 7-17, 1694.—I have received your grace's letter of the 4th of August, and should be very glad if I could follow your advice; but really I am so surprised at receiving the king's positive commands, to winter with the fleet at Cadiz, that I do not know whether serving six months, as I have done, a ship-board, and six months to be at Cadiz, and six months more

a ship board, whether it be not better to put an end at once to a troublesome life, as I have made it, when I might have lived quiet, free from the noise and trouble I hourly undergo; for so I must call them, since neither day nor night am I free from the cares and troubles that attend the conduct of this fleet. Really, I am not able to undergo the burthen; all my hours are full of cares, and apprehensions that my labour will be rewarded, as hitherto it has been, with complaints and ill-usage. In short, I will complain to you no more, since it cannot, at present, be remedied; but this I will conclude with, that the perpetual care and fatigue has brought me under several indispositions, which, this winter will increase, doubtless, and then there will be an end of an old story and an old admiral.

"But to the business: I have writ Mr. Secretary a long letter; therefore, will make your's shorter. Had I been in England, I should not have advised wintering the whole fleet here; but rather, as I had proposed to myself, a squadron of 10 english and 6 dutch, such as sailed the best, which would have made them very uneasy. Pray God send the service that is proposed by their stay may answer the hazard of leaving them here. I observe in the report made to the king, by which his order to me is grounded, there is this clause; that in case the french get through the Straits, I should send as many ships after them to join the fleet in England. That is a thing, if it happens, will be impossible for me to perform at this time of the year. Can it be thought I can put ships in a condition for the sea, upon an alarm, fit to undertake so long and dangerous a passage as the french can, that come out of Toulon with that intent, fitted for the purpose, with all things necessary; whereas, I have not ten ships that are in condition to be ventured home in October, which the navy-board know or ought to know, (they having the defects of each ship before she came out), and it is reasonable to think she has rather grown weaker than stronger. These are things which ought to have been well considered of; but when I saw the paper sent from the committee to the king, I concluded what would be the event, well knowing the king's passionate desire to have ships in these seas, without

considering how reasonable it may prove to the other services. He fancies the defects of a ship are as easily repaired as mending a bridle or stirrup leather."

After complaining that the dutch ships had no supply of provisions beyond the 7th of September, and were without money to procure them, he again adverts to the parsimony and neglect of the king.

"Pray pardon me for troubling you with a foolish story of my own. I chiefly tell you, to shew what pleasure a man has to serve a prince, that has such generous thoughts. Before I came to sea, the king told me he would give me 1,200*l.* for making my equipage. I found out the money for him, that he would never have had. The money was received by his closet keeper, and he went away, without taking any notice of it to me. Pardon this foolish complaint, which is not worth thinking of, especially since, God be thanked, I want it not. I have done, my lord, and am now going up again, as high as Alicante, which is as high as I can prevail with the dutch to stir, unless they have provisions from Carthagena, as is assured by Scoremburg; but I am certain there is not any, nor will they trust the king of Spain for 100 crowns."

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Complains of severe indisposition.]

"*Alicante, 21st Sept.* 1694.—My lord; When the fleet was at Malaga, I was seized with a violent fever, the continuance of which, made me doubt I should not have the happiness to see you again; and though I am now so far recovered, as to hope the danger of my distemper is over, yet I am so weak, that I cannot write to your grace with my own hand. When the fleet came to this place, I was obliged to come on shore, and to send them to sea under the care of vice-admiral Aylmer, but I hope in a few days to be able to go on board again, and remain," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[Apologises for the king's orders—Professions of friendship.]

"*Whitehall, Sept.* 25-*Oct.* 5, 1694.—Sir; Besides the inclosed

letter from the secretary of state, this is writ to dear Mr. Russell, from his humble servant and faithful friend, to assure him his surprise could not be greater at the receipt of his majesty's orders, than mine was, when I understood he had sent them so positive. All that ever was intended here was, a liberty to be left to you to act as you should judge best, and when the queen came to send her orders and instructions, the committee of council unanimously represented, that they should not be so positive as the king's, as I suppose you will have observed; and yet they were much more binding than ever was designed, had not the king before sent his, and directions to us, extreme pressing, to write in the same style.

"I am very sensible of the uneasiness it is to you to be so long confined from your own country, and to so troublesome a business as you have upon your hands; but I hope a little time and some good luck may make us all quiet and happy in private conditions, which I have long thought, and not yet altered my mind, is the only state one can be happy in. All I can add is, that the king must necessarily think himself and the public highly obliged to you, who, being easy in your fortune, to sacrifice so much time and rest upon that account; so that if there be any thing in his power you would wish, I think this a time it cannot be refused you."

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Will obey the orders of the king, though contrary to his judgment and inclination.]

"*Cadiz Bay, October* 8-18, 1694.—My lord; I have received your grace's two letters of the 14th and 26th of August. I find you believe me a man of more passion than ever I was guilty of; but whatever people may endeavour to persuade others, that my passion may lead me to pursue such measures with the fleet as may be contrary to the orders I have received, will find themselves mistaken; for as long as I have wherewith to defend myself, I can venture a great deal, though probably what I am doing is contrary to my opinion. Your grace will pardon me, that I do not write to you in my own hand, for my fever has relapsed, and I have not strength; but in whatever condition I am, I shall be," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[Concerned at his indisposition—Laments his disappointment, and recommends him to solicit some honour or reward from the king.]

"*Whitehall, October* 23-*Nov.* 2, 1694.—Sir; The news we have received from Alicante of the 10-20 September, that you were then ill of a fever, has frightened all who are strangers to you, if they wish well to England. Imagine, then, how much more your friends are alarmed, who have a double concern for your health; but I hope this will find you as I wish, and better, I am sure, you cannot wish yourself.

"Nobody can be more sensible than I am, how great the hardship is upon you, to be thus long banished your friends and country, who might live so easily at home, and enjoy both, with plenty and pleasure. I am sure, when the merit of this is represented to the king, in the manner it deserves, as I am sure I will endeavour to do, the first time I speak to him, he must be so persuaded of it, as that it will be impossible for him to refuse any thing to you of honour or profit, that a subject may, within any compass of reason, ask. I would therefore recommend to your thoughts, whether if you have any thing of this nature to desire, it would not be proper to lay hold on this conjuncture. I remember once you were offered a title, which then you refused. I know not whether the same reasons of modesty subsist, and cannot imagine that any ought to hinder your accepting what every body allows so much your due; but if you agree with me, that this is a proper season to obtain any thing of any kind you desire, I hope I need not tell you, you may make use of me in what manner you please, and you have not in the world one that is more faithfully and zealously your's," &c.

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Has been requested by the king of Spain to repair to Barcelona, on the debarkation of 15,000 french—Complains of the foolish fears of the Spaniards.]

"*Cadiz Bay*, 19-29 *October*, 1694.—Sir; I have very little to trouble you with, more than the acquainting you, that I have re-

ceived a long letter from the king of Spain, dated the 6-16 of this month, pressing me to go with all speed with the fleet to Barcelona, in regard the French had landed 15,000 men at Blanos, and that their fleet, consisting of seventy sail, was at Palamos. I do not know where they may be now, but at the time the letter was writ to me, they were at Toulon. I returned an answer, that when the dutch had got provisions, I would put to sea. I am like to have a fine time all this winter, by reason of the foolish fears of the spaniards; for the time of the year in these parts does already begin to make it too troublesome for a fleet of this consequence to be at sea; but as I will venture any thing that in reason is fit, so I shall be cautious how I hazard the fleet, unless it be upon a very extraordinary occasion, and in that case, I shall govern myself by the opinion of the flag officers of both nations. For my own part, I have flattered myself these many years, that I had left off cruizing in November, but I am so far from complaining that I will submit to all things. The queen's orders command I should send home ten ships of the third rate, in the room of those that are designed to come hither. I do very much fear I cannot find a third part of that number fit to be ventured home, by reason of their weakness, but I will put them into the best condition I can, and then see if they can be sent with safety; however, I think it necessary to acquaint you, that a council of war, which I called the 18th instant, have resolved, that it is not advisable to send away either the said ten ships, or the eight dutch, which his majesty has ordered, till such time as we can have certain intelligence how the enemy do design to dispose of their fleet, least otherwise they should be too strong for us." * * * *

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[His stay in the Mediterranean generally approved—Advantages resulting from it—Will reap the honour of any success, without incurring the blame of any misfortune.]

"*Whitehall*, 20-30 *Nov.* 1694.—Sir; I doubt it is not an infallible sign, that a man is without passion, because he says or thinks so. I wish this may be your case; but men are apt to mistake themselves, and think they are impartial, when they are otherwise.

I always apprehended your continuance in the Straits would be uneasy to you, though I never questioned but when you did stay, you would make the best use of it for the public service.

"It happens hitherto, that the resolution of the fleet's wintering at Cadiz, has not only met with general applause in Christendom, and extremely disappointed the french designs; but it is approved here by almost all sorts of people, as the only step that has been made by us this war, that looks like a vigour, or a mind to put an end to it; and I cannot but think that whatever design was inducement sufficient to send the fleet into the Mediterranean this last summer, may be executed the next spring, with greater probability of success, when there is time to act, and to return to our ports before the bad season comes on.

"If any considerable advantage can be attempted against the french fleet, either in their ports or otherwise, it seems more reasonable to hope it in those seas than here, where they can avoid you as they please; and if a second blow could be given them by the same hand, it would be so happy to England, as well as glorious to you, that I am sure you will spare no pains nor thought to effect it. One cannot help flattering one's self with some hopes of this nature; but if that should not be practicable, forcing the enemy to lay up their ships, where they are not provided to refit them, sending their men over land to Brest, and the honour we have got, though I know not how rightly, of having saved Barcelona by the countenance of your fleet, has given reputation to our affairs in those parts, and is one excuse for carrying such a fleet so far from England. Whereas, if you had returned this autumn, done no more than looked into the Mediterranean, and come home in a season dangerous to the great ships, and perhaps with the damage or loss of some of them, the expedition would certainly have been disapproved, by those gentlemen who are our governors in winter, and censured not only as wanting success, but as undertaken when there was not seen a possibility of expecting any, the time not permitting you to go so far as to look upon an enemy's port, and yet constrained to return later in the year, by some weeks, than it is held safe for so considerable a fleet to be abroad in those seas.

"Speaking with the same ingenuity I have always used to Mr. Russell, and allowing for the trouble and uneasiness of your so long absence, I cannot think but that you are at this time in much the considerablest station of any subject in Europe, and in a circumstance extreme safe and happy for your reputation: engaged in a project, you did neither advise nor approve, and therefore, not in the least answerable for the event, yet necessarily must have such a part in the management of any thing, that may succeed, that you will have the greatest share in the glory. I heartily wish it may end to your own satisfaction, and the public good, and to the settlement of every thing here, upon so secure a foot, that people who have a mind to retire and be quiet, may be allowed to do so; but it is time to release you from this tedious trouble."

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the movements of the french—Wishes to have the commission of general—Peevish expressions of complaint.]

"*Cadiz, October* 21-31, 1694.—My lord; I have very little to add to what I have writ to Mr. Secretary Trenchard's letter. Only this minute is come news to me, that the french only appeared at a distance before the coast, off Barcelona, and the 15,000 men, the spaniards have been so afraid the french would land, are about 4,000 recruits. I am also assured the whole french fleet put to sea, giving out they designed for Barcelona, only to draw me to those parts, that they might take the opportunity of coming down with the Brest squadron on the Barbary shore. This news I have from people I employ; how true it is I will not answer for. Though the time of the year produces, for the most part, very bad weather here, I will do what lies in my power to prevent their passing, though it is a very hard matter.

"I must beg the favour of your grace to move the king that he will order my commission to be a general. It was what I designed asking his majesty before I left England, that is, when I knew of my coming to these seas; for admiral in Spain, is squire in England, so insignificant a name it is in these parts. It is not a new thing; lord Sandwich, Black Dean, and several others had it; but

I would not have your grace think me fond of the thing; so far from it, that if the king makes the least scruple, I beg you will let it fall; for I can as well dispense the next summer with admiral Russell, as the last; therefore, I once more beg your grace not to press it, only just move it to his majesty. If it be possible to serve at sea eighteen months, I may hope to see you again; if not, my cares about my house and garden will be at an end."

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Allows that the continuance of the fleet has damped the spirits and lowered the reputation of the french—Complains of the conduct of the dutch, and the king's partiality to them—Laments his unpleasant situation—Considerations on the future projects of the french.]

"*Cadiz, November* 2-12, 1694.—I cannot express the joy I received at reading so kind a letter from the duke of Shrewsbury, inclosed in that grave one from the secretary.* I am sure it is needless to tell your grace how much I value and honour your esteem and friendship, since you know I was not less ambitious of your favour when out of power; so that I cannot be thought guilty of flattery, when I assure you, I know no man whose favour and friendship I more earnestly beg, and I please myself with the thoughts, that from your former kindness, and the assurance you are now pleased to give me of your friendship, I am not the last man in your esteem.

"As to what you are pleased to say about the positive orders I received, I will venture to say, there never was the like done, and he that countersigned such a paper was a bad man. I am of your opinion, that the fleet's wintering here, may break some measures the french had taken, and I believe gives them some trouble about their Brest fleet. But since the time of the year is so advanced, I fancy they will keep them all at Toulon, and probably endeavour, this winter and early in the Spring, to join them with a number to be superior to ours, and so think of coming down to the place before I am ready; (but in that they will, I believe, be disappointed,) or think to draw the war to these seas. I can raise many objections

* September 25.

to the latter; for if you are the next summer stronger here than they, it is not to be imagined the prejudice it will do them in their trade, if it be carefully looked after; and their credit and reputation, by avoiding me, is the most sunk that can be imagined in all this part of the world behind them, that you had no ships, nor durst not meet them, now all people are in admiration of your ships, and have as low esteem of them, if we can hold it. My coming out without any bomb vessels was a great misfortune, and next to that, a number of dutch ships with provisions, only to carry them to Barcelona and home again; but a certain person* thinks the dutch cannot err, and, God knows, they do nothing else.

"Now, give me leave to trouble you a little with the uneasiness I have in my letters expressed to lie under. I have not for many years been fond of the sea, and to be kept on board for near two years is enough to try any man's patience, that has less temper than I have. Besides, I had many things in my private concerns that I left at random, expecting my being home by September, and what I suffer will hardly be made up to me by the generosity of a certain person; and really the expence of being in these seas, if I will live as a man in my post ought to do, and for the king's honour, is so great, that if you will believe me, I have spent a couple of thousand pounds more than the king allows me as admiral; and now I come to Cadiz, double that sum will not excuse me, for I will live as an admiral of the king of England ought to live, let me be never so great a sufferer, as I really expect to be. You say this is a time to ask, and certainly I shall not be denied. I will never ask, and he knows not how to give, but I have nothing to ask, for I have no ambition; all my desire is to live quietly, without being forced into such misfortunes as you must believe I lie under, being here. If my services have merited any thing, other people are better judges of that than I am; and were I in a condition of wanting, I could rather suffer than put the king to the trouble of denying, and myself to the shame of being refused. I know of no favours I have to boast of, and possibly I am prouder

* The king.

of being slighted, and (if I may so say), used ill, and persist in doing the best services I can for the sake of my country, than if I had been a favourite, and been rewarded for my endeavours. I can with truth affirm, that since I had the honour to see you, my care and pains have exceeded any day-labourer. I could pass over this, and think my time well spent, if it would produce thanks unasked; but I know too well, that it is either not believed, or else thought a duty I ought to pay: this I have long perceived, which has made me set my heart more upon my poor country retirement, than otherwise I should have done. If you do not stand my friend, I may be a very great sufferer; for through my foolish notion of living as I think the king of England's admiral ought to do, I shall spend out of my own pocket more than the king allows me, two or three thousand pounds. I shall think it very hard to be obliged to what I am, and spend my own fortune for my pains; and by the taste I had of the king's generosity in my equipage money, I writ you from Malaga, it is much to be feared I may be a sufferer, if some such friend as yourself does not assist me. I must now live as I have begun, let the event be what it will. If you can have the goodness to pardon this long letter, in which I have troubled you with so much relating to myself, I do here promise you for the future to make my letters so much shorter, as what concerns me has filled the paper.

"But upon the business of the french, give me leave to make this conclusion (whether good or bad, you will be the best judge): if the french winter with their whole fleet in these seas, one of these things they certainly design: either to hope early in the Spring to pass me, with expectations I shall not be ready; or else to join a greater force to them here, by sending small numbers at a time, to avoid making any noise, and so be superior to me. Most certainly they will not suffer themselves next year to be in the condition they were in the last. Their reputation in this part of the world is very much lessened. Of the preparations in the west of France I know nothing but from England; and if the enemy comes to be stronger, I will do as well as I can, but I can fight much better upon an equality. By March, we shall want, at least,

29 hundred, or 3 thousand men. If 1,500 old soldiers were sent us as part of the recruits, it would do very well. I dread the thoughts of the men the admiralty will send out. If they be young raw fellows, they will presently fall sick; and if they bring a distemper in the fleet, we are undone. I have now done; I fancy you will be heartily glad of it. What impertinence you find relating to myself, be pleased to pardon, since it comes from a man that is, with all imaginable truth and respect," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[Congratulates him on being in better humour—Wishes him to propose some enterprise against the french—Will mention his extraordinary expenses to the king, who is in good humour with him and his friends—The king readily granted him the rank of general.]

"*Whitehall, Dec.* 4-14, 1694.—Sir; I have received together your letters of the 2nd of October, and the 2nd of November, and desire you will not mistake me so much as to suspect the length of them can be a trouble to one that is so truly your servant. I cannot write a letter as the king's secretary, but at the same time I will write one as Mr. Russell's friend; and in that tell him how glad I am to find him in a better humour this post than the last. For God's sake consider of what consequence it is to us to do something, if possible, upon the french fleet, before they get out of those seas, and with cheerfulness propose what yourself approve. The court, the parliament, the people, are in better humour than you can imagine, and one blow now upon France, makes the nation safe and happy for a long time. We have had a great loss in the Archbishop,* but I hope it will be better filled than is generally expected. I do not doubt but the first opportunity I can take of laying your extraordinary expense before the king, he will be very reasonable and ready to consider it, for he is in very good humour with you and your friends; and, though I was extremely surprised, two or three days since, with hearing sir Ralph Delaval had kissed his hands, and since that, Killigrew,† the account he

* Archbishop Tillotson.

† Two tory admirals, who at this time obtained some promotion.

gave me of it was so natural, that though I am obliged to secrecy, I desire you will give me leave so to beg your confidence, as to depend upon me, it has nothing of that in it it appears to have.

"When I proposed to his majesty the giving you the title of general, he made no scruple, and ordered me to search the precedents to know in what manner it could be done, which I will take care to do, and by the next post give you a more exact account."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[The king hesitates in granting him an additional allowance.]

"*London, the* 18-28 *Dec.* 1694.—Sir; Though by the last post I had a letter from the admiral only, and not one from Mr. Russell, and though I am very much out of humour with the apprehensions of the gout, which will certainly increase whilst I am tied to this hateful, unnatural, sedentary life, yet I cannot omit taking notice to you, that I represented to the king the extraordinary charge you were at, in supporting the character your present circumstances obliged you to maintain; and that it would be very severe, if, in addition to your other uneasinesses, you should be forced to run out of your own fortune. I found it had been put into his head, that your command must certainly be very profitable, measuring it upon the advantage that usually attends Straits voyages. I endeavoured to shew him the difference of those cases; and though then I could not get a positive resolution for a supply to you, yet I have no reason to despair, but when I am able to go abroad and speak to him again, I shall send you a better account of this matter."

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Fretful complaints of his own hardships, and the reserve and neglect of the king.]

"*Cadiz Bay, Nov.* 28-*Dec.* 8, 1694.—My lord; I am extremely obliged to your grace for the very kind letter you was pleased to honour me with, bearing date October 23, and your grace's kind concern for my ill-health, which news arrived with you about that time. I have since troubled you with several letters; and by the

length of my impertinent epistles, I believe you will conclude I have a large share of health, or rather that the late distemper has turned my brain, and my business now is, to trouble my friends. I am very conscious of my fault, and have asked you a thousand pardons, for taking up so much of your time in things relating to myself; but really I was so full of concern for the public, and extreme uneasy that it should fall to my ill-fortune to be commanded, endeavouring to execute, what I fear will never answer what is expected, that my head and heart were so full of grief, that I had no way left to ease me, but by unburthening myself to such a friend as your grace is pleased to allow me the honour to believe.

"As to what you are pleased to say in your letter, that my confinement here will be thought so meritorious, that whatever I ask either of honour or profit, within the modest bounds of a subject, cannot be refused me; I must freely confess to your grace, I have been vain enough to think with myself, that before this time, my services have, if not exceeded, yet equalled some that I have seen receive early marks of the king's favour, when I have been wholly unregarded. If I might then have been honoured with any mark of honor, I swear to you, upon the word of a gentleman, I had declined it; and now to desire any thing of that kind, would look to the world as if I took my first rise of receiving a favour or honour from his majesty from this piece of service, as you are pleased to believe it. If my inclinations had so much vanity to hope or expect upon my application, to obtain that mark of his majesty's esteem, I have not a fortune to support it. I can live very well as Mr. Russell; beyond that, my circumstances will not admit, and I shall be less able after the voyage.

"But I fear, my lord, you think my service deserves better than the king believes. I ground this thought from never having the honour, in all this time of my being abroad, to have one single line from the king; nay, my orders for remaining here were handed to me under the cover of that never-erring minister Mr. Blathwayt, without ever giving me the least hint of the king's thoughts upon so important a matter; when at the same time, under my cover, the dutch vice-admiral was honoured with a letter under the king's own

hand. This, you may please to believe, was no small mortification to me; but I have had the ill-fate in this war to meet with many. How well I have deserved them I will not pretend to be a judge in my own case; but I trust in God I shall get through the many difficulties and hardships I lie under, and yet live a poor honest country gentleman, and make you welcome at Chippenham, which is all the honour I desire or have deserved. I hope to enjoy quiet there, a pleasure I have been a stranger to, since the king was pleased to honour me in Holland with his commands to embark in his interest.

"I have now troubled you with a long letter about myself, and I remember in my last, I promised never to take up your time in what related to my particular concern; but your grace is in the fault for giving me fresh proofs of your kindness.

"I am using my utmost endeavours to refit the fleet; but the weather has been so excessively tempestuous, that has hindered us extremely: no care and pains on my side shall be wanting. I have used the sea 26 years, but in all that time I never underwent half the trouble and fatigue I have done since I saw you. From the 30th of April, to this minute, I have not lain once out of the ship, but continued aboard in all the cruel weather, nor do I know when I shall have time to set my foot on shore, though I have taken and furnished a house. The multiplicity of business does hourly require my being on ship-board, which is a dwelling much worse than a country gaol, but, as the Irishman says, it is nothing. I suppose, when all the difficult work is over, the officers of the navy from England, will arrive here to assist me. I am admiral, commissioner of the navy, victualler, store-keeper, in short every thing but a happy man."

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Writes more cheerfully—Dilapidated state of the fleet—Remarks on the intended operations of the ensuing year—Miserable condition of Spain]

"*Cadiz Bay, Dec.* 31-*Jan.* 10, 1694.—My lord; The last post brought me your grace's letter of Nov. 20. I find by that, you will not allow me to be a competent judge whether my passion has

overcome my reason. I confess it was some time before I could relish staying abroad all the winter; and the world of business that was incumbent upon me, made no small addition to the uneasiness of my mind; but I have called to my remembrance an old saying, 'what can't be cured, must be endured.' For the future your grace shall find me make merry. I am using the best endeavours with the commissioner to fit the fleet in time. Many of the ships are in a lamentable weak condition, and the worm—eats terrible; all these things considered, you must resolve to have these ships at home early, I mean in August; but then you will lie under a great difficulty; for if the french continue a fleet here, they will be at liberty, from July to the last of September, to act as they please. In that time they may be masters of all the sea-port towns of Spain. It will be, in my poor opinion, necessary to consider, in time, how to prevent this evil; that is, supposing the fleet of the enemy to remain here, and the summer passes without our being able, by a battle, to decide who shall be master of these seas. If this should so happen, doubtless the argument for a fleet's being here the next winter, will be as strong, if not stronger, than this. I have thought a great deal on the matter; and the best conclusion I can make is, that when the fleet is at sea in the summer, and the french have no strength in that sea, orders should be given, not to be opened till at sea, for that fleet to pass hither, and then to return, not to stay till the others arrive. This method, I fancy, may be kept so secret, and executed with that diligence, that neither the enemy nor spaniards shall know our fleet is returned for England till the other arrives. I may be extremely mistaken in my thoughts on the matter, but I was desirous to offer my opinion. Certainly something must be timely thought on, to prevent the french having all Spain, or as much as they please; for, by what I can learn, Spain is, if possible, in a worse condition this year to defend itself, than the last: they are a miserable people, purse-proud and ignorant, and amongst them as much knavery as can be found in the north. Pray let me receive your commands in what relates to

the public. I would fain do some service here, if I knew how, and you may be assured I will not be wanting to seek the occasion.

"You are pleased in your letter to tell me I am in much the most considerable post of any subject in the world. Please to pardon me, if I think commanding the whole fleet was a greater post than this of part; but I agree my trouble has been greater, and of longer continuance than any subject's; but now I am pretty well at ease as to that matter. I do not doubt but your grace and the rest of my friends blame me for having expressed my dislike in staying here. Nobody knows where the shoe pinches but he that wears it. I grow an old fellow; and as some sort of pleasures have forsaken me, so a little spleen has come upon me."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[Death of queen Mary—Affliction of the king.]

"*Whitehall, Jan.* 1-10, 1694-5.—You will excuse my not writing to you with my own hand, which I can scarce do at present.

"I know you will be as much concerned to receive the melancholy account, as I am to send it, that the queen fell ill of the small pox, the 20th of December, and died the 28th in the morning. Certainly there never was any one more really and universally lamented; but the king, particularly, has been dejected by it, beyond what could be imagined; but I hope he begins to recover out of his great disorder, and that a little time will restore him to his former application to business.

"The lords and commons have behaved themselves upon this occasion with great duty and affection to his majesty, in their seasonable resolutions to stand by him in the defence and support of his person and government."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[Has been prevented, by the king's affliction, from pressing his requests.]

"*Windsor, Jan.* 15-25, 1694-5.—Ever since I received your's of the 28th of November, and for some time before, I have been troubled with a weakness in my eye, which continuing still upon me, I am here now, to try if rest and air will give me any relief. This misfortune of my own, joined with the affliction his majesty has been under, and still expresses, to a passionate degree, has hindered me from making any steps towards what you commanded me, in your late letters. I dare not yet be too bold in writing, therefore, I hope you will excuse this short letter from," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[Has not ventured to read his letters to the king, but has communicated their substance—The king expresses an inclination to serve him, but is cold on the demand of an additional allowance—The king reconciled with the princess Anne.]

"*Jan.* 29, 1694-5.—Between my own ill health, and the retired manner his majesty has lived in, since his last great misfortune, I could get but one convenient time to lay before him the contents of your's of the 28th of November.

"Since you left it to my management, I did not read your letter to his majesty, fearing some expressions in it were too warm, if not too harsh; but punctually repeated the contents of all your grievances, which were heard with great patience, and answered with much kindness; assuring me, there was no opportunity he would not lay hold of to shew his esteem and good wishes to you. I mentioned the expense you were at; *but you know his dry way of answering such proposals, till they are well pressed upon him,* which I engage shall not be wanting on my part, when his condition makes it a little more decent. He told me what you took ill in his writing in his own hand to the dutch vice-admiral, inclosed in your packet, with the orders to remain in the Straits, was a mistake, which he tells me he has writ to you; and when he particularly directed me to write to you, I think it was the 8th of the last month, concerning what should

be undertaken in the next campaign, it was upon heads taken from his own mouth, and which he designed at first to write to you himself, till he recollected you would want an interpreter* to understand his letter.

" Since the death of the queen, and the reconciliation between the king and princess, her court is as much crowded as it was before deserted. She has omitted no opportunity to shew her zeal for his majesty and his government; and our friend,† who has no small credit with her, seems very resolved to contribute to the continuance of this union, as the only thing that can support her, or both. I do not see he is likely, at present, to get much by it, not having yet kissed the king's hand, but his reversion is very fair and great. This is too long a letter for the weakness of my eyes, but I could not stop sooner, and am, Sir," &c.

---

* The king usually wrote in french, which admiral Russell did not understand.

† The earl of Marlborough.—See the Memoirs of the duke of Marlborough, Chap. 6.

CHAPTER 2.

1695.

Proceedings of the fleet in the Mediterranean—Transport of a reinforcement of troops, from Finale to Catalonia—Russell approaches the french coast, but is driven off by a storm—Offends the king by his fretful complaints—Military operations in conjunction with the spaniards in Catalonia—Destitute condition of the spanish army—Second expedition to the coast of Provence—Disappointed in his purpose of attacking Toulon—Resumes his station at Cadiz—Considerations on the state of the fleet, and its disposition after his departure—Returns to England—Succeeded in the command, by sir George Rooke—Correspondence from February to September, 1695.

ADMIRAL RUSSELL employed the winter in refitting and preparing his fleet; and, in the beginning of February, was gratified by the arrival of a plentiful supply of provisions. In April, also, he was joined by a body of 4,500 land troops, under the command of brigadier Stuart, accompanied by a fleet of victuallers, and twelve bomb vessels.

Soon afterwards he put to sea, and arriving off Barcelona in May, found the spanish affairs in that province, in the same declining state as before. It being now necessary to adopt some decisive plan of action, admiral Neville was detached with a squadron, to convoy a body of spanish troops from Finale; and at the same time was instructed to ascertain the dispositions of the duke of Savoy, with respect to an attack on Toulon, or an invasion of the french territory, with the assistance of the fleet. Finding, however, that no effective co-operation was to be expected from the duke, Neville accomplished the only service in his power to perform, by joining the grand fleet with the spanish troops under his protection.

The british admiral, thus left to his own resources, was anxious to annoy the enemy by some attempt on Toulon or Marseilles; but at this juncture he was earnestly solicited by the marquess of

Gastanaga, governor of Catalonia, to assist in the recovery of Palamos, with the troops under his orders. He complied, and the forces were landed; but the attempt proved utterly futile, and terminated in an useless bombardment of the town and castle. The narrative of this transaction will appear in the subsequent pages.

Still, however, the admiral did not desist from his design of harassing the enemy; and, accordingly, stretched across to the coast of Provence, to ascertain the practicability of an attack on Toulon or Marseilles, but he found the enemy far better prepared for defence than was expected, and was driven off the coast by a violent tempest, which considerably damaged his ships. As the autumn was then arrived, he despaired of effecting any farther service in the Mediterranean, and, in the latter end of September, resumed his station in the bay of Cadiz.

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Thanks him for procuring the commission of general—Chagrined at the parsimony of the king—Complains of his expenses, and denies that he has made any profit in his command.]

"*Feb.* 10-20, 1695.—My lord; The commission* you was pleased to mention is come to me, and in as good a form, I think, as the thing will admit of; I am to return your grace many thanks for your favour and kindness in this matter. The having this commission will look better in this country than any other, and produce more respect, which was the only cause of my first moving it to you, and not from any vanity of my own; though if I may say, without appearing vain, I have, in all outward appearance, settled myself as much in the spaniards' esteem, as I could do with all the titles that could be given me. I hope they speak well of me behind my back; they make great compliments to my face, and in their letters. What you are pleased to say of the king's being possessed with an opinion I should make great profits here, I do not wonder at, these voyages having proved very beneficial to the chief commanders; but I cannot bring myself to

* The commission as captain-general.

make the profits formerly practised. I do not share with the commanders in what they make, as usual; nor do I, in any kind, make use of the little ways and means that have been the custom. I will shew the world I am above that; and in this I considered the king's honour as also in my way of living. I am sure no man out of England ever served more for the honour of his king and country than I have done; and where any other admiral has spent a pound, I have spent fifty. I do not say this to press you to importune the king, for I am satisfied. Knowing the worst of any thing, I am always easy, and rest satisfied; but it is natural to think a great prince should take care of a subject, that considers his glory more than advantages to himself. This has been the method for kings to oblige their subjects to serve well, and depend on their rewarding them for those services; but if I can contrive to come home no worse a man in my fortune than I went out, I shall be satisfied.

"Upon the small encouragement the king gave you, to expect any consideration from him on my behalf, a wise man would retrench his expenses; but I cannot do that: I must persist in my foolishness, and repent at leisure. If I might meddle with any of the prizes, I could put money in my pocket; but to this minute, I have not touched or concerned myself with the value of a shilling. Upon the whole, I do assure you, I have not, by any ways whatever, since I came into the Straits, made to myself the advantage of a pistole, and many a thousand it has cost me. I desire you will let that request fall: I shall take some pleasure in saying, I have served thus long abroad for nothing; and, God be praised, I can serve to my mind, in as much plenty as I desire.

"As to what you say about being vice-admiral of England, I do not know what answer to make to it. You are in the right, I have often said I would not have it; it is only a feather in one's cap. If I thought, after I came home, I should have any thing to do in the navy, it would incline me more to desire it; but I know not what I would wish as to that business, but submit myself to your disposal, as to that and all things that relate to

me. You shall never hear any more complaints from me. I stand corrected. Order the fleet and me as you please, I will cheerfully obey; and though I confess my staying abroad was a great trial of my temper, and judge by yourself, if you had been in my case, it will not appear so very strange a thing, if I should desire to be at home, in quiet; but I have mastered that folly, as it is thought. I may say, without vanity, no man ever took more pains than I have done, and in some measure I have been successful, in making the fleet, as much as possible, interrupt the french trade. I hope to make it yet more; my endeavours shall not be wanting.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[The king desires him to remain another winter in the Mediterranean, but refrains from pressing—The duke requests to know his wishes, and will second them.]

"*Whitehall, March* 12-22, 1694-5.—Sir; Since my return from Eyford, I have communicated to his majesty the contents of your three private letters to me, of the 2nd and 31st Dec. and the 13th Jan. In great part he approves of what you propose as to the method of changing the fleets; and is resolved, in a very few days, to take that matter seriously into his consideration. The number and strength of the ships with you is so much greater than what remains here, that some of those now with you must continue there, or the fleet, next year, in the Mediterranean, will hardly be of force sufficient to be masters in those seas. I find his majesty very desirous you should remain there, with the command of the fleet the next winter, if it continues; and yet considers so much your loss, and the hardship it is to keep you so long in banishment, that he has, with difficulty, thoughts of proposing it to you. His majesty, I believe, has expected I should be informed of your inclination, which I did not dare absolutely to take upon me to know; but in my own judgment, inclining rather to believe you will desire to see England, I have prepared him for that choice, in case it should be your's. I desire, by the first opportunity, after the receipt of this, you will let me know, in a private letter, what you would rather do. If you

come home, sir George Rooke, I imagine, is designed to succeed you in your command in the Straits. I will use no persuasions; for, between the service you may do there, and the desire I have to see you here, I scarce know what I do wish, though, as an englishman, I well know what I ought to wish." The address of the house of lords, which I conclude Mr. Vernon sends, will shew you how much the staying of the fleet in the Mediterranean has pleased there. I, who come out of the country, can assure you it has the same approbation there. I hope the success will answer it."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[Is glad the commission is to his satisfaction—Has not pressed his appointment as vice-admiral of England.]

"*London, April* 9-19, 1695.—Sir; I am glad the commission was as you desired it. The king himself mentioned something to me of your being vice-admiral, but with his usual inclination to delays, thought it better to be done when you returned. I would not press too much for the present, because you ordered me not to do so; nor would I insist upon an absolute promise at your return; it being what will then be impossible not to be offered to you: and I would not give him the least ground to imagine that would be the sum of your pretensions, who have deserved from him and this nation all that can be given you.

"The paper you sent of the condition of the ships comes very opportunely, as you will perceive by letters I have writ. His majesty has now the state of both fleets before him, and says he will very soon take a resolution how they shall act next winter, and in what manner the weak ships with them shall be relieved; but the time of the year presses his going over; and the french having drawn together, to enlarge their lines, makes him now more impatient for a conclusion of the session; so that I doubt determinations will be made in a hurry, not proper for a matter of this weight and difficulty.

"I suppose the public news will have informed you what

bribery has been proved upon some members of parliament,* and what suspicion upon others; in short, these inquiries have thrown so much dirt, that I conclude this same parliament can never sit again. I think it fit to give you this hint, that if a new one should be called before your return, you might write to whom you think proper here to secure your own election; for in one house or other it is certainly necessary you should be."

REPLY OF ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[Is flattered with the king's good opinion, but declines remaining another winter, on account of ill-health—Considerations on the state of the fleet, and future arrangements.]

"*Cadiz Bay, April* 16-26, 1695.—* * * * I am extremely proud of the honour his majesty is pleased to do me, in approving of my endeavours to serve him, which shall always be my study; but I cannot possibly bring myself to have so vain a thought as to believe my capacity or endeavours will make the service more successful, than it would be under another man's management, well knowing my own weakness as to the first; and though my endeavours are with never so much pains and industry, other men may have a faculty of dispatching with ease what costs me labour. Was my temper or health in such a state as would admit of a longer stay in these parts, under the fatigue that the business creates to me, I should be very glad to remain another year, since his majesty has so favourable an opinion of my service (as your grace is pleased to write me); but really, without the least dissimulation, or making excuses, I am in no condition to undergo the like I have. I will not trouble you with my own private circumstances, which, by my unexpected long stay here, are in a very disordered condition; that is the least of my concern in the matter of staying abroad another year; but I am so very much out of order in my health, that unless I can come for England, to receive the benefit of the waters, and the Bath, I

* The duke alludes to the charges of venality and corruption brought forward against several members of the House of Commons, on the subject of the Orphan Bill and the renewal of the East India Company's Charter, in consequence of which, the speaker, sir John Trevor, was expelled.

very much apprehend I shall lay my bones in this country, where you know they will not give us heretics christian burial. But, setting aside raillery, I am so much out of order, that another winter I am not able to live in this country. The business that I may lie under is not what much troubles me, for that every day will grow less and less, here being now all the proper officers to attend the service, and are become very expert at what can be required of them; so that I am past over the greatest drudgery; therefore, pray believe I have not the least uneasy thought upon that matter; and what I must farther observe to you, is, that the summer service will be, if not quite, yet in a great measure over, before I shall be relieved; so that the whole business of whomever is to relieve me, will only be to mind refitting the fleet, and to order such cruizers abroad as he shall judge necessary. I say this to shew you how small the business will be to him that comes in my place, though I know the king will make choice of such as will perform and go through with any difficulties, if such should arise (not now to be foreseen), much better than I am able; and therefore, I must earnestly beg of you to lay this matter before the king in such manner as I may conclude with myself, another will succeed me, and that I may hope to have the honour to see you this next autumn in England."

After entering into various details with regard to the state of the fleet, he proceeds:

"The next thing to be considered is, the time when the ships designed home shall be upon their returning; this, if not timely resolved upon, may prove of the last ill-consequence; for if they be not in England before the ill-weather sets in, I fear few of them but will fall in pieces; for all August, I think, they should be in some port of England. If the time be prolonged, I should be very unwilling to give my opinion for their proceeding from Cadiz. Whatever can be done upon the enemy, must be over by the last of June, or middle of July; so that by the latter end of July the ships for England should be retiring, and I think it may be done upon pretence of watering, that hardly any body may know of their being designed home; and if, as you say, the king

approves of my notion to have one fleet coming, while the other is returning, I may leave orders with the consuls of the several towns, from Cadiz to Barcelona to be given the officer that comes out, or to whomever he send in, under the obligation of secrecy. By these orders he will know what ships I leave, and in what port they are to be found. I desire I may be fully instructed relating to the dutch ships, whether all, or what part is to continue; as also the land-forces under brigadier Stewart."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[The king earnestly wishes him to use every effort in his power for the defence of Barcelona, unless he should have formed some design on Toulon and Marseilles.]

"*London, May* 7-17, 1695.—Sir; His majesty waits now a fair wind to carry him to Holland, and before his departure has commanded me to signify his pleasure, that in the first place you carefully endeavour to protect the trade, and, as much as you can, to secure the coast of Spain, but more especially the town of Barcelona, which his majesty thinks of so great importance to the common interest, that in case it should be in danger of being attacked by the enemy, he particularly directs that the four regiments now with you, be immediately put into the town, for the defence of it; unless, by concert with my lord Galway, or otherwise, you should have formed some design you judge likely to succeed, either upon Toulon or Marseilles; and that the four regiments be thought necessary to assist in the carrying on that attempt: in which case his majesty would not have them diverted from that service; the destroying the power of France by sea being what he would have you chiefly endeavour, as thinking it of the first importance to the interest of England.

"His majesty is not yet come to so perfect a resolution, as to be able to adjust the time when those ships shall return from you, which are judged too weak to remain there another year, nor when it will be proper to send those from hence, which are intended to relieve them. He thinks this must depend upon the intelligence of what is preparing at Toulon and Brest; but in the mean time, care will be taken to put the ships here, designed for

the Mediterranean, in as good a condition as can be for those seas, and orders have been given for the providing stores and victuals to be ready by the end of July."

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Is preparing to sail—The french think that no attempt will be made on Toulon.]

"*On board the Britannia, Cadiz Bay, May* 2-12, 1695.—My lord; By this post I have little to trouble your grace with, only acquainting you, that the first day a wind presents, I resolve to put to sea; and with me sixteen of the dutch squadron. The rest that want provisions, vice-admiral Callemberg designs to leave here, to bring up to the place of rendezvous their ships with stores and provisions not yet arrived. This day I have received a letter from lord Galway, dated March the 3rd, with a draught of Toulon, and observations thereupon. It seems, by that letter, the french think it impossible that Toulon should be attempted. I cannot say what can or cannot be done upon this port; the strength there is very great, by several relations I have lately had; but what can be done, your grace may please to believe shall be performed.

"I most impatiently long for some opportunity of rendering my king and country service, though I fear (as the gentlemen tell that lately came from England) it will not be answerable to what is there expected; but I shall hope, if I use my endeavours, his majesty will be satisfied, whatever the success may be."

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Arrangements for bringing the troops from Finale—Will attack Toulon, if there is the least hope of success.]

"*On board the Britannia, in Alicante Road, May* 11-21, 1695.—My lord; At my arrival at this place, I received the honour of your grace's letter, dated March the 26th, with duplicates of those of the 14th and 20th, which letters I acknowledged the receipt of in my last from Cadiz. I have very little to trouble your grace withal at this time, only that I am now sailing before Barcelona, where it is resolved, by a council of war, that upon what intel-

ligence we may have of the enemy's preparations, the transport ships to Finale should either be sent by a detachment, or the whole fleet. I am not able to say whether it is possible to attempt any thing upon the enemy's ports, they having, by all the information I can receive, fortified the several places, with their utmost diligence; but if any thing can be done upon them, your grace may be assured I will not omit it. I hope to receive some advice from my lord Galway, whether any men in the duke of Savoy's army can be spared to join with those in the fleet, to make that attempt your grace mentions upon Toulon. I hope by the list of ships I sent you home (that may probably be in a condition to remain another winter in these seas), the admiralty will be able to complete a strength superior to what the french have now, that being in my opinion of the utmost consequence in case a fleet stay.

"The dutch men of war and their victualling ships, are not yet arrived, which they are in great want of. Their whole squadron now consists but of sixteen ships."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[Is hopeless of any success from an attack on Toulon—Dilapidated state of the coin—Wishes him to bring bullion on his return.]

"*July* 2-12, 1695.—Sir; We have had no letter from you since your's of May 11th, O. S., which, requiring no answer, I gave you no trouble the last post, but cannot omit a second, without assuring you of my concern for your success. One need not repeat the importance it would be to destroy the ships at Toulon; but I doubt the precautions they have taken, will make it very difficult, if not impossible; and the land-forces they have in that town, and Marseilles, and thereabouts, are superior to what we can bring to oppose them, unless the disposition of the landing could be so contrived, that they could not tell in what place you would go ashore, and so be obliged to separate their men, and the execution would be over before they could join them again; or, that the duke of Savoy could be prevailed upon to quit all his other projects, and undertake this; but I do not find that is very likely, though I think it demonstrable nothing else can be proposed that is feasi-

ble, so much for the interest of the allies in general, as the destroying the strength of France by sea. This, heartily undertaken on all hands, might be brought about, and a good peace would certainly follow.

"One of the main difficulties we lie at present under, is the scarcity of good money, and the quantity of bad. This will, I believe, necessitate parliament to an expense for the regulating the coin for the future, and for the present raises guineas to above thirty shillings: the price of guineas raises gold; gold raises silver, though not equal. This being the case, makes me put you in mind, that bullion, whether of gold or silver, would never be so welcome to us as in this conjuncture, if you have any opportunity of bringing a quantity, when you return, or sending it by a safe conveyance, that may come upon other occasions."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[The king has sent him discretionary orders for his conduct.]

"*Whitehall, July* 4-14, 1695.—Sir; Since the writing mine of the 2nd of this month, the lords justices have received a letter from Mr. Blathwayt, by his majesty's desire, upon which the order sent you of this day's date, is grounded.* I hope it will not be displeasing to you, at least, since as to what relates to your own person, it gives you a greater latitude than before; and my opinion has ever been, you should not be restrained, but left to your own judgment, because nobody can judge so well what is fit, nor is more concerned for the success," &c.

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Has approached Marseilles—Driven off the coast by a heavy storm—Complains of the weakness of the dutch squadron—Lord Galway acquaints him that no aid can be furnished by the duke of Savoy—Desertion among the french troops in Catalonia.]

"*On board the Britannia, 6 leagues south from the isles of Hieres,* 14-24 *June,* 1695.†—My lord; When I came upon this station, I

* Allowing him permission to return.

† In this, as in other instances, we have placed the letters, rather according to the order of facts than of dates.

ordered several light frigates before Marseilles and Toulon: from both places I have taken boats and vessels, which assured me their fleet was not in a readiness to come out to sea, and of their having made all imaginable preparations to defend themselves against any attempt I should make. Upon this news, I sent away rear-admiral Neville, with eight ships of war, and two fire ships, to convoy the transport ships to Finale, and to bring the ships and soldiers to this place. In the mean time, that I may not lie idle, I had ordered rear-admiral Mitchell, with a squadron of light frigates, in which was to go the engineer Beckman, and the four land colonels, to view Marseilles, while I stay with the fleet in sight of them, that from their information I might take measures to attempt that place. But the next day I had a most violent storm at north-west, which continued with me three days and three nights, driving me near fifty leagues to the southward. God be praised, the fleet received no other damage than what can be repaired here, besides the terrible complaints, which all the captains made of their ships being leaky. Rear-admiral Neville has now joined me; and after dispatching a proper convoy with the soldiers, must be forced to water the fleet: when that is done, I shall return to this place, where I resolve very well to inform myself, if any service can be done upon Toulon or Marseilles; for though I meet with nobody that does not talk of these places, as if it was an enterprise not possible to imagine success; I will not rely upon hearsay, but as much as can be, will be a judge of the thing myself. Your grace may be assured, I will not lay aside the thoughts of these places upon slight information. At Toulon there are fifty-two ships of the line, at Marseilles were thirty-six gallies, ready fitted, but twenty I saw early one morning going into Toulon. These gallies may make an attempt more difficult with bomb ships, not having any thing proper to protect them against the gallies; but if it appears that I can bring the bomb ships near enough to do execution, I will take the best care I can to protect them.

"I am very sorry that care has not been taken to send the dutch ships and provisions in time. Since I left Cadiz, I have

had but fourteen ships of war of that nation; and being obliged to send ships to Leghorne, Finale, and Messina, I have come before this port with forty ships, great and small. My lord Galway writes to me that I must not expect any assistance of land-men from Savoy, measures being taken to besiege Casale, so that Nice, which was a place very necessary to be regained, must remain in possession of the french, without which they cannot march into Provence. I reckon Catalonia is secure by the help of the men now sent, with those that are expected from Flanders, and the great desertion there is daily of the french army; and to encourage that, I have sent several hundreds of papers, in french, dutch, and english, promising rewards, and liberty to dispose of themselves as they please, to all such as shall repair to the consul of Barcelona. I make no question but it will have a good effect. I have already supplied the regiments with one hundred and thirty, and have now at Barcelona more than that number waiting for the fleet. Several of them that come are men taken at the battles of Fleuruss, Steenkirk, and Camaret, though many french, germans, and swiss come away also. The french army is not above nine thousand foot and three thousand horse, and those in no good condition. I have nothing more to trouble your grace withal, but that I am with great respect," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[Is glad he approves what has been done as to the commission of vice admiral—The public much discouraged by the report of his return from his command.]

"*Whitehall, July* 30-*Aug.* 9, 1695.—Sir; This is only to acknowledge Mr. Russell's letter of the 12th of June, to his humble servant. I am glad you approve my conduct in the matter of the vice-admiral. I did it for the best, and to answer the character I believe you desire always to have, and that which the world does you the justice to allow you.

"If you have any vanity left, it would rejoice a stoic to see the concern the city is in, upon the report of your coming home, and sir George Rooke's going in your place. I am informed, several turkish merchants that have bought their effects, upon this altera-

tion, resolve not to venture them. The truth of the matter is, to oblige you to stay longer, would have been a barbarity to you, and your not staying is a cruelty to the public. In my own particular, I am a good deal comforted with the expectation of seeing you, which will ever be most agreeable to," &c.

The next letter is that to which allusion has already been made, in the correspondence between king William and the duke of Shrewsbury. It was sent through France, and being addressed under cover to secretary Blathwayt, was opened by the king himself. The style of reproach in which it was written, and the acrimonious invectives against the dutch, will easily account for the impression it made on the royal mind, and the censures it drew from the duke of Shrewsbury in reply.

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Barcelona Road*, 21-31 *July*, 1695.—I herewith acknowledge the receipt of their excellencies, the lords justice's order of the 11th of June, which, by the grace of God, I will obey in the best manner I can. I am afraid my temper has been represented to be too froward and uneasy, which inclines me to make no reply or representations to the orders I receive. But this last order, which comes by his majesty's directions to the lords justices, will prove (as I apprehend) so very prejudicial, that I could not avoid laying my thoughts before them, and I hope your grace will not believe it proceeds from any uneasiness that I lie under, but purely for the public service.

"I will depend so much on your grace's good nature to forgive me, that I will trouble you in this private letter with what offers to me on the whole matter.

"Except it be those ships represented to you in my letter from Cadiz, of the 17th April, O. S., there is not any other but what ought to be on their passage to England; and should I, pursuant to the order, send such ships home, as are not fit to continue longer abroad, I would be glad to be informed of what use the remaining part would be here, till joined by a farther strength; so that since

these ships must remain till the latter end of September, or beginning of October, to perform some Flemish expedition, I do affirm to you, that it is impossible for them to return home with any reasonable hopes of safety.

"The king might have been pleased to impose what hardships he had thought fit, upon me (as making a winter voyage for England, is a great one); I should have been very well satisfied; but to expose the fleet to so apparent danger, upon no other account (as I can foresee) than saving the dutch their money, of which I have had many instances this voyage, I cannot but repine at it, to a degree that gives me all imaginable disquiet. It is not hard to guess that this advice comes from secretary De Wieldy, of the admiralty of Amsterdam, and I cannot bear the thoughts that a dutch secretary should govern the english fleet. Had there been any one reason given against the representation the lords justices made to the king, for the defective ships returning, I could in some measure have been satisfied; but, as matters are now ordered, the consequence I fear will be, that the three-decked ships must winter at Cadiz; and from their own weakness, and the worms eating, it will be almost impossible ever to get them home again; or if otherwise, and they proceed in October, it being the most tempestuous season in the year, they will perish in the sea. If I am not extremely out in my calculation of this matter, I am sure your grace's thoughts will be no more at quiet than mine are. Had the dutch complied with their quota of twenty-four ships (of which ten considerable ships have been all this summer wanting), as I have said in my letter to the lords justices, I should have sent with the turkey convoy, those of my fleet, that are in the very worst condition, which would have been some ease to my mind. But when these ships will arrive, God knows, and these here, had I not lent them money, must have remained at anchor at Barcelona all this summer, nor have I had any service from them in the winter. Their constant want of provisions, and their thriftiness in not allowing their ships to be cleaned, has made them of no other service than lying for a shew in the Bay of Cadiz.

"I must desire the favour of your grace, that I may know

whether any ships are coming out of England, that I may leave in the several ports the necessary orders for their proceeding; and what flags shall be here to govern the fleet after September; for at present, I know nothing, but that after that month I may be drowned in coming home. I am not free from the apprehension of an order coming to me to stop me here all this winter, which, if such a thing should happen, I will rather run the hazard of his majesty's displeasure, than remain here; for I am already ruined in my health; and whatever people may surmise to the contrary, I am very considerably a worse man in my own fortune than when I left England; nor am I under the least expectation or hopes of that being made good to me by his majesty's bounty or generosity. But pardon this expression, being things that give me no uneasiness.

"I have at last got the turkey fleet, and am sending them to Cadiz, in order to their proceeding home. They will be accompanied by the Grafton, Edgar, Warspight, and a fireship. God send them safe.

"I have no news to write to your grace from this place, but that I design to go to-morrow to the coast of Provence, before the vice-king here can propose an immediate service for them. I am ordered to pay the english troops their subsistence, without having any money; nor is there for their better government any power to place or displace officers. I do not say this, that I desire it, but questionless, for discipline's sake, it should not be wanting in some hand or other. I must beg your grace's pardon, that this letter comes not in my own hand-writing; at present I have a great lameness in my hand, that it is with some difficulty I hold a pen to subscribe my name."

REPLY OF THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Whitehall, Aug. 27-Sept. 6, 1695.*—Sir; Your letter of the 21st of July, O. S., came to my hands the 23rd of August, by the way of the Groine; but a few days before I received that letter, Mr. Blathwayt sent one of the same date from you to the lords justices, which came inclosed to him through France, and told me

there was one also from you to me, which his majesty had, and would send me by the next post. My lord Portland writ me an excuse from the king, that he had not had time to write. Another post is since come, and I hear nothing from his majesty, which is the less to be wondered at, because the present posture of his affairs in Flanders is perhaps in a greater crisis than ever they were; but taking it for granted that letter which is in his majesty's hands, from you to me, is the duplicate of your's of the 21st of July sent by the Groine, it bearing the same date, you may imagine the pain I am in to know how the king will resent some expressions in that letter, a little too free for his perusal. You must give me leave to think you even in the wrong, to send any letter through France, that gave so exact an account of the condition of your fleet, and how it was to be disposed of the rest of the summer; but if that was not very cautious, with respect to the public the inclosing a letter to me in one to Mr. Blathwayt, of the nature of your's, was not more careful of yourself, since curiosity or suspicion might very well invite the king to what has unluckily happened. What sort of effect this will have upon him, I know not; what I shall say, I wish I may, when I do know; but in the mean time wish you success in what you undertake before you return, and then a safe and speedy voyage to your friends, among whom none will be more glad to see you than, dear Mr. Russell, your's," &c.

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Sends an account of his proceedings at Palamos—Complains of the weakness of his fleet—Is going to examine Toulon.]

"*On board the Britannia, before Palamos, Aug.* 16-26, 1695.—My lord; In my letter to your grace of the 21st of July from Barcelona, I sent you word the vice-king desired my assistance for retaking Palamos, in order to which I came with the fleet to this place. The following account is what happened while we lay there. I am now going before Toulon. Probably the news of my having sent several ships home, may encourage them to

give me battle, especially being upon their own coast. I am joined by the five dutch ships left at Cadiz, for want of provision. The four others that came with the soldiers are at Barcelona, and I do not find that they design for the fleet, being ordered to convoy back the same ships to Alicant; and when they are loaded with salt, to take them and those that came with the soldiers from Finale, seeing them to Cadiz; so I am not like to have any benefit by them. From Toulon I design to go off Alicant, for these seas are too troublesome to be in in September. I know not what to do; for unless some ships come from England, of which I have not the least notice, it will be impossible to send any more ships home, with safety to those that are to remain; and the time of the year will be so far advanced, that I am in no small fear for the preservation of those that are to go home. Thus I labour under daily inconveniences, which I fear nobody in England thinks of; but I will struggle with them as well as I can."

[Account of the proceedings from the first time it was desired of me that his majesty's subjects should land in Catalonia—Sent to the duke of Shrewsbury, inclosed in the preceding letter.]

"*On board the Britannia, before Palamos, Aug.* 16-26, 1695.—In answer to a letter I received from the vice-king, I promised him the assistance of his majesty's troops, in case he could propose making use of them for any sudden enterprise. Upon which he desired a conference with me at Blanos, which place was near half an hour's riding from his camp. At my arrival there with the fleet, it was proposed to me that I would suffer his majesty's troops to land there, in order to march to besiege Palamos, that being about two days march from Blanos. I, foreseeing the many inconveniences that might attend their landing there, excused it; but that if they were in condition to lay siege to Palamos, I would land three or four thousand men, in the bay near that place, with this consideration, that I could not answer for their being from the fleet more than seven or eight days; and that he must order his affairs after such a manner, that in case the naval

power of France appeared, I must have my men re-embarked; for that I could not answer their being from the fleet more than the time before limited, to all which he agreed. I then sent brigadier Stewart on shore, to adjust all such matters with him as was necessary for the troops, and then dispatched away a vessel before Toulon, to endeavour the taking some prisoners, that I might certainly know what the enemy was doing; after which I sailed with the fleet before Palamos, the spanish army arriving near St. Feleu, Wednesday the 7-17th. The brigadier attended upon him and the spanish generals, they assuring him all things were ready for the siege; and that the french army (which was small in number) was beyond a town called Bisbal, four leagues from Palamos.

"According to their desire, on Friday the 9-19th, by two o'clock in the morning, I landed three thousand of his majesty's subjects, and five hundred of the subjects of the states-general, under the command of count Nassau. The goodness of the men was such, as the spaniards stood in admiration of. The same day, by nine in the morning, the army marched, and encamped that night about two miles from Palamos. All this time there was no news of the enemy; but the next morning, when my men, who had the van of the army, marched out of the narrow ways into a defile, the enemy appeared in great numbers, and especially horse; but that put no stop to their march, but they went on and possessed themselves of the ground near the town, that was designed for them. This was a great surprise, all people taking it for granted the enemy was not within two days march of them.

"After the army was encamped, they endeavoured to secure themselves in the best manner they could; but every thing was wanting that was necessary, and the spaniards, in a terrible fright, begging my men to stand by them. The next morning the enemy's whole army was drawn up in battalia, the foot upon the hills, and the horse in the valley, about a mile from them. The account the deserters gave, was, that the enemy resolved to give the spaniards battle, and, as they termed it, ride over them, not knowing, till that night, that I had landed any men. All this day

and night the army was under their arms, and my men without bread and wine, which they had promised to provide at their landing; and had they not carried on shore a few poll-axes and hatchets, the spaniards were not able to provide them, wherewith to cut trees and boughs, to make the necessary security for themselves; nor were there any spades to make entrenchments. At this time the spaniards were so scared, that they gave the right of the army to brigadier Stewart, and desired him to command and do as he thought fit; the vice-king sending me word he had intelligence by deserters, that the enemy was to be reinforced by four thousand Roussillions and three hundred horse; that his whole dependence was upon the troops I had lent him, and expected a battle the next morning, at which time the enemy appeared drawn up within half an hour's march, having that morning given wine and brandy to their men, resolving to attack the english brigade; so that if they could beat them, they made no account of the spaniards. But after marching about two hundred yards, they wheeled about, and marched directly away, which was no small joy to the spaniards, who were before terrified out of their wits. This was the first time my men had any rest since their first landing.

"The vice-king sending me word of this with great joy, desired I would the next morning bombard the town and castle, which I accordingly did; and though the sea was great, and the place a small mark to hit, the town and castle were in a manner demolished before night, and the fire continued in several places all night.

"This morning the vessel I had sent upon the coast of Provence returned to me, with two fishermen of Toulon, who brought me positive word, the french had sixty ships of the line of battle, ready armed in all respects, except powder, and lay in the road of Toulon, fit for the sea. Upon this news, I sent to marquess Gastanaga to have my troops embarked, that I might go in search of the enemy, lest they should pass the Straits when I lie here; but the spanish generals had taken such heart at the enemy's marching off, that they desired the king's troops might continue,

in order to lay siege to the town. Here I must observe to you, they had not the least thing necessary to make their approaches; no shovels, pickaxes, wheelbarrows, engineer, in short, nothing that is usual on such occasions: Notwithstanding this, they were for besieging the town, and very much pressing to have the king's troops remain, which I could not agree to, but sent again for the men, recommending to the vice-king, securing his own army, by marching away at the same time, lest the french should attack him when they were gone; and he knew how little able he was to make any resistance, laying before them how improbable it was to take the town, in case the king's subjects should remain; since the strength of their army with the reinforcement I had given them, was but barely equal to the enemy; and if the siege had been advanced even to the walls of the town, the moment the enemy appeared, they must draw off, and possess themselves of the most advantageous ground. Upon this he sent me word he was of my opinion, but all his generals were for besieging the town.

" In another letter I desired him to consider, if his army was beaten, the country must be lost; and I also directed the brigadier and the rest of the colonels to argue this matter with the generals, to shew them how indiscreetly they were going to act for their king's service. Upon this occasion some very indiscreet words fell from marquis Greency, Castilliane, and some other officers of the first rank, that the fleet might be of service to England, but was of none to Spain; that they would make a separate peace, expressing themselves much in the dauphin's favour as to this country. The same thing, or to the same purpose they said to the prince of Hesse,* which made him send me word he believed there was treachery among them, and that he would not suffer the emperor's troops to lie exposed without reason. I have some reason to fear that money, promises, or both, have been given to these spanish generals.

* This was the prince of Hesse Darmstadt, afterwards viceroy of Catalonia, who was killed in the attack on the citadel of Montjuich, in 1705.—See Memoirs of the Kings of Spain.

"This night they agreed the king's subjects should embark, and at ten in the morning the vice-king sent to me, desiring that my boats might land their eight pieces of cannon they designed for a battery, which accordingly was done, before six at night; and before twelve, all the men were on board their respective ships, at which time he desired my boats might reimbark his cannon again, he resolving to march away the next night, and that I would remain in this place a day or two, to countenance their march, all which I have consented to; and they are now on their march to Ostalrick, and by what I have observed already, they will march farther in two days from the enemy, than they did in six towards them. God send them well thither; for nothing but a high mountain or an unfordable river is security sufficient for such miserable creatures, with officers at the head of them who are no soldiers. This is a true account, and the most exact that I am able to give of this proceeding.

"The king's subjects were on shore six days."

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Has received intelligence of sir G. Rooke being appointed to succeed him—Thinks, however, that he will be too weak to undertake any thing—Complains that the dutch admiral is ordered to return—Has surveyed Toulon, but finds it too strong to be attacked—Twice driven off by storms—Apprehension that the weak ships may be lost in their return.]

"*On board the Britannia, in Altea Bay, Sept.* 4-14, 1695.—My lord; The first of September, O. S., I received your grace's letter, dated July the 30th, which brought me the news of sir George Rooke's coming out to command the fleet in these seas, and at the same time, intimation from the admiralty, what time probably he would sail, and with what ships, which number is so small, that I cannot imagine what he will be able to do, in case the ships go home, that I have represented not to be in a condition to continue longer abroad. Upon this consideration I called all the flag officers together, with intention rather to run the hazard of leaving some of the ships, in the best condition, to strengthen sir George Rooke, till others came out, than have him run the hazard

of being insulted throught want of strength, or the enemy attempt passing the Straits, and he not able to oppose them. But when I came to discourse of this matter, the dutch vice-admiral told me he had orders from the king to come home himself, and bring with him the ships mentioned in the margin ;* and so far was he from having any notice of others to come in their place, that he told me, till the ships appointed to return were arrived, no others would be sent. Upon this, I concluded it was to no purpose to leave any other ships of the english, than what were in my former letter represented as fit to remain abroad; and though my passion for returning home may be thought great, I have had so much consideration for the public service, that I did not think to leave this part of the Straits till the latter end of September, or that I heard sir George Rooke was arrived at Cadiz, lest the enemy should make any attempt on Barcelona, or endeavour to get through the Straits for West France. But since the dutch vice-admiral is of the opinion, that, pursuant to his orders, it is necessary to go for Cadiz without loss of time, that he may make the necessary dispositions for his ships returning, lest they may not be able to get into Holland by reason of the ice; I have nothing more to do, but proceed homewards, ordering the ships to Cadiz, there to attend sir George Rooke's arrival. Pray God send us well home. It is a terrible season of the year with such ships to be crossing the seas; and though, by the lords justices' order of July, his majesty was pleased to leave me at liberty to return, I thought since the ships were to stay, I would come with them, especially when I considered what uncertainties the officers must have been under, I not knowing what orders to leave with them; for then I knew of no ships coming out, nor of any body to command them.

"I have another very great difficulty upon me. By the number of men I sent your grace in the winter each ship was equipt with, it was visible three thousand men were wanting for the fleet, since which, great numbers are dead, and these soldiers, I thought,

* The list consisted of 16 ships of the highest rates.

were to put them in the proper condition of ships of war; and by his majesty's order I am commanded to bring these men home in the last ships, which will wholly disable those I leave behind. What to do in this case I know not: if I leave any soldiers, I do contrary to what I am ordered; if I do not, it is plain the ships are not in condition for service. I have now stated the case of the fleet with as much brevity as I am able.

"From Palamos I wrote your grace I was then designing for Toulon, which accordingly I did, and stood so far in as to discover their ships, and saw preparations were making to fit them for the sea; but that night I had terrible weather of wind, rain, thunder, and lightening. The next day proving fair, I resolved again to go in; but it was calm most part of the day, and at night the same weather as before, only a violent storm, in which one of the advice-boats overset, and most of the men drowned. With this weather I came away from that coast, and since have heard my appearing gave the enemy a great alarm, concluding I had no thoughts of coming on that coast any more. They are certainly preparing their ships, but what to do with them I know not. To fight with me I am sure is not their intention, since they would not, after knowing my strength, and that I had detached home such a number of ships of that force; so that I conclude their design (when the fleet is retired to Cadiz, or the Levant winds set in to blow hard) must be to pass the Straits. If the spaniards be not all knaves, fools, and cowards, they can do little this time of the year against Barcelona, considering the army they have; but I shall leave them to God and themselves; and if Providence does not protect them, against all their own endeavours, Spain must be a prey to any that will demand it. I should have considered before the length of my letter, and not troubled your grace with this latter part, being nothing to the purpose. After saying this, please to give me leave to assure your grace of my being, with the utmost respect," &c.

"I suppose sir George Rooke comes out fully instructed what

to do. I leave no orders of any kind for him, and I suppose he knows how the king would have him move, if the french do, or do not attempt going out of the Straits."

Towards the close of the year, Russell was gratified in his desire of being released from this distant and arduous service, and leaving admiral Mitchell with the most efficient ships, amounting to twenty-three sail of the line; he returned to England, with twelve sail, besides the dutch squadron, and was finally succeeded in the command by sir George Rooke.

We thus conclude the correspondence of admiral Russell, during his expedition to the Mediterranean; and the result will shew that the movements of the fleet, in an essential degree, decided the fate of the war; for no sooner was the naval force, under sir George Rooke, withdrawn to repel the invasion, which soon afterwards threatened the british shores, than the affairs of Italy and Spain fell into irremediable disorder; and the conquest of Catalonia, which followed the defection of the duke of Savoy, enabled the french to dictate terms of peace.

CHAPTER 3.

1695—1696.

Return of admiral Russell from the Mediterranean—Entrusted with the command of the fleet prepared to repel the projected invasion from France—Blockades the french harbours in the channel—Unable to destroy their armaments—The enemy relinquish the projected invasion—Return of the admiral from his command—Correspondence in February and March, 1696.

ADMIRAL RUSSELL reached the british coast in November, and arriving exhausted with fatigue, declining in health, and dissatisfied with imaginary slights, was still farther disgusted with a cold reception from the king, who could not overlook his captious complaints, and disrespectful reproaches.

Soon, however, he was again called into action; and nothing can furnish a stronger proof of his eminent abilities, than the consideration, that, notwithstanding all the defects of his unaccommodating temper, he was always selected, to serve his country in the hour of danger. Such a crisis now approached; for at the moment when the assassination plot was ready for explosion, the french harbours in the channel were swarming with ships of war, and a land force was prepared to effect a descent on the british isles. King James had, himself, repaired to Calais, to head the expedition, and it was confidently hoped, that under the pressure of domestic distress, and the dangers of a foreign war, the nation would readily welcome its former sovereign.

Providentially, a squadron, which had been destined for foreign service, had been detained at Spithead by contrary winds; and another intended for the protection of the coasts, was ready to sail, though not manned. In this state, admiral Russell was ordered to take the command; and such was his reputation and popularity in the fleet, that numbers of seamen, who had concealed themselves from the heavy press, spontaneously offered

their services; so that in three days, Russell stood over to the french coast, with fifty sail of the line, and was joined by twelve dutch ships,* making a force of sixty-two.

In England the most sanguine expectations were formed, not only that the invasion would be defeated, but that the french fleet, which was cooped up in their harbours, would be destroyed, and their marine receive a serious loss. Admiral Russell was not unacquainted with the dangers and difficulties to which his fleet would be exposed in this attempt, but with his characteristic activity, he employed all his energies to so beneficial a purpose.

We find in the subsequent correspondence, an account of his proceedings in this memorable expedition, from the time of his sailing out of the Downs, to his return to England. His instructions were thus communicated by the duke of Shrewsbury, in a letter dated

"*Feb.* 24. 1695-6.—Sir; The king commands me to acquaint you, that in case upon your appearing with part of the fleet, the enemy should find themselves disappointed in their first design, and so betake themselves to some other attempt, either upon the coast of Flanders, Zealand, or Holland, you should observe their motions, and protect those coasts as far as it may be done conveniently, with regard to the safety of the fleet. I am," &c.

In his reply of Feb. the 25th, the admiral says, "You may depend upon my executing his majesty's pleasure, and I hope to be of strength sufficient to oppose with success any design that may be attempted on England."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO ADMIRAL RUSSELL.

[The king uneasy at the delay which has occurred in uniting the fleet—Sends intelligence of the designs and movements of the enemy.]

"*Whitehall, Feb. 25,* 1695-1696.—Sir; His majesty is very uneasy at the unaccountable delays that have happened in the

* Kennett.

squadron at Portsmouth not sooner sailing, and does earnestly recommend to you to do what you think may be best for the joining them without delay, and then to go over to the coast of France, as his majesty says you resolved, when you had gathered together your strength. The inclosed extracts will give you an account that the squadron at Portsmouth did not hope to sail before this day noon, and will also give you information of some french ships that are out in several places, and have taken two of our men of war.

"An Ostend privateer, that lies now at Margate, has sent up an account that 300 sail of transport ships are gone from Dunkirk to Calais. If you think it of any use to be informed more exactly what he says, I have here inclosed a translation of that account, and you may send to speak with him if you please.

"When England and Mr. Russell are both so nearly concerned in the same success, you will not much doubt what are the hearty wishes of, Sir, your's," &c.

On the 26th, the admiral informs the duke, that he had ordered a small frigate to reconnoitre the french coast, which brought the information, that ten sail were lying at anchor off Gravelines. "To-morrow," he adds, "God willing, I will remove them. I resolve to be under sail by break of day; but the wind being easterly, and a lee tide, hindered me from stirring to-day. Sir Cloudesley Shovel is on the back side of the Goodwin Sands, with five ships from the North, and those from Yarmouth, which I saw join him this morning. The ships from Portsmouth (I mean the English) are not yet come, which I wonder at; not that I think I want them; for without their assistance, I hope to be able to beat any force I shall meet with."

The next letter from the admiral, which is dated Feb. 28th, gives an account of his sailing from the Downs, and his proceedings till his arrival off Gravelines

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

" My lord; I hope your grace will please to pardon me, that I did not give you an account of my sailing out of the Downs: it blowing hard, and I very busy in working the ships out, was the occasion of the omission, concluding that from my lord Romney and several others, you would be informed of the fleet's sailing. The badness of the weather forced me to come to an anchor mid channel over, where I remained all night. This morning I got under sail, ordering sir Cloudesley Shovel, with a squadron of ships, into Boulogne Bay; my lord Berkeley off Gravelines; myself and the dutch steering directly for Calais, where we arrived about twelve o'clock, standing so near in, that I could plainly see what they were doing upon the shore, and had two ships within half gun shot of their castles and platforms, from whence they fired several mortars and guns, but did very little or no damage to the ships. Calais is so full of small embarkations, that it is impossible to count them, or to make any right judgment of their numbers, but I cannot think them less than three or four hundred ships, barks, and boats, all of them with their sails to the yards. I, myself, saw the people on shore very busy, drawing artillery from one place to another, which, I suppose, was to raise batteries against bomb-vessels, which, I believe, they took the hoys and smacks that were with me to be.

" I am now at anchor off Gravelines; my lord Berkeley midway between me and Dunkirk Sands. I see before Dunkirk in Flemish road, about sixteen or eighteen sail of ships, great and small, which I believe is their whole armament to protect this embarkation. I cannot send your grace any account what I can do against those ships, being an utter stranger to the place; but some of the pilots that I have talked with, say, they cannot be attacked in that place. To-morrow morning I will consult my lord Berkeley, and sir Cloudesley Shovel, with the pilots, who have all been upon the coast before; and if any thing can be done, it shall not be omitted. This coast, at this time of the year, is not a place

to lie long upon; therefore what can be done must be with expedition. If I had had a bomb-vessel or two, I fancy they might have done some mischief in Calais pier, the ships lie so thick. According to sir Basil Dixwell's desire, I have ordered two ships to cruize off Rye Bay, where, he says, they are very much annoyed with small privateers.

"I send your grace, inclosed, a list of the ships that are with me, which I take to be a strength sufficient to defend England from any fleet the french will send into these seas, at this time of the year, and therefore think to send the Victory back into the Downs to-morrow."

In his reply of the 1st of March, the duke of Shrewsbury writes: "I have laid your letter from off Gravelines before his majesty, who commands me to tell you, he is sorry there should be so much difficulty as you are informed there is, in attacking those men of war in Flemish roads, but hopes and recommends to you, if possible, to do something upon the enemy before you return. If those men of war may lie there safe, and can be destroyed or removed by no force, and the transport ships are so secured, that they also cannot be burnt, the apprehensions the nation are under can never end till the enemy please. This his majesty commanded me to say to you, not doubting at the same time, but you would, upon this important occasion, act with as much vigour as is consistent with the safety of the fleet under your command, and more he would not expect."

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Proceedings on the french coast.]

"*Victory, off Gravelines, March* 2, 1695-6.—My lord;**** Upon Saturday last I sent the Centurion to Ostend, with a letter to the duke of Wirtemberg, that he might employ her for England, if he had any occasion, or send her back to me, with what news he had of the enemy's motions, either by land or sea. There is now thirteen sail of ships of war as close in with the pier of Dunkirk as possible, with their topmasts and yards struck; and I suppose

have got out some of their guns to lighten them to get them so near in. I have had small frigates pretty near them, who judge four of them to be about 70 guns, three between fifty and sixty, and the rest small frigates. These are the ships I told your grace in my last were in Flemish road. I have this morning sent sir Cloudesley Shovel down with all the pilots, to see if they can be attacked by fireships, as they now lie; and if not, and that no bomb vessels are designed hither (which I believe might annoy the ships at Calais), I think of coming over for the english coast, leaving behind me a sufficient strength to guard these people.

"The surprise of seeing such a number of ships so unexpectedly will put an end to the business of a descent, at least I hope so. I conclude monsieur Nesmond, with his squadron, is not yet arrived here. When sir Cloudesley Shovel returns to me, I will be sure to dispatch away to your grace the account he brings. I have nothing more to trouble you with, but that you will please to do me the honour to assure the king, I will not be wanting in any thing that lies in my power to do his majesty the best service I can, remaining, with great respect," &c.

"As to any landing by the vessels in Calais, I believe you may be assured they cannot stir, and I think you may take your measures accordingly."

The report of sir Cloudesley Shovel and the pilots did not encourage the admiral to make any attempt against the enemy, as we find from his letter of March the 3rd.

"*Victory, off Gravelines, March* 3, 1695-6.—My lord; I sent your grace yesterday an account that I had ordered sir Cloudesley Shovel, with all the pilots, into Flemish road, to view the place, and report to me their opinions whether the enemy's ships could be attempted there. A copy of the paper I herewith send your grace, by which I do not see it feasible to destroy them; for if the pilots will not bring the ships to an anchor, it is, to the best of my judgment, impossible to send fire-ships upon them; their large

boats (of which they have ten) will take the fireships before they can come to the enemy; but if that should not happen, as they have placed themselves with a spring to their cables, and their shrouds lashed to the mast, a fire-ship can have no hold of them, but laying them athwart the hawse, which they may prevent by what I say of having a spring upon their cables. Upon the whole matter, I do not see any way for us (as they now lie) to destroy them; and for the transport ships at Calais, there is no way of sending in a fire-ship there: what bombs may do against them, lying so thick, I know not; but I would have tried this time of fair weather, had there been any with me. * * * * I beg your grace to believe, that if any thing could be done to destroy these ships, I would venture a great deal to perform it; but upon so little prospect of success to attempt it, and may be with the loss of a ship or two, besides burning the fire-ships without doing service, will only serve to be laughed at, and lose the ships. Upon these considerations I conclude with myself it is better leaving a squadron to attend this service, and come for the Downs with the rest, where they may lie ready to join, in case the enemy should come into the channel with a greater strength. I fancy the next letters your grace has from this side of the water will give you an account of the design being laid aside, and the men dispersed. Yesterday morning several guns were fired at Calais; about two hours after, guns were fired from a town midway between that and Gravelines: three hours after that the town of Gravelines fired; just before night Dunkirk fired, from which I imagine the late king James was going from Calais to Dunkirk, to make a visit to that place."

In conformity with this resolution, admiral Russell quitted the coast of France, leaving sir Cloudesley Shovel to continue on his station at anchor, or to cruise at his own discretion, to use his endeavours to prevent any ships coming out of Calais or Dunkirk; and to take every opportunity of annoying the enemy by his fire-ships and bomb-vessels.

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Incloses the instructions for sir Cloudesley Shovel, and desires the king's permission to return.]

"*Victory, off Calais, March* 6, 1695-6.—My lord; The inclosed orders are what I left with sir Cloudesley Shovel. I hear it is thought, in London, a very feasible thing to destroy the enemy's ships: I shall be very glad it may be found so; if any service can be done, I question not but he will perform it effectually. I wish they may not meet with any hard storms of wind while upon that coast; those I have had, though not to any great extremity, make me conclude it very dangerous to have ships there at this time of the year. I send your grace a list of the ships that come away with me; I suppose my service here is no longer necessary; I therefore beg the favour of your grace to move the king I may have leave to return; unless for any service unforeseen by me, his majesty may think my being here of use to him; in that case I am ready to perform what he is pleased to command. We have had abundance of snow, and though not a storm of wind, the greatest sea I ever saw. Several of the ships by rolling have received damage, but only two much disabled.

"I shall leave more ships upon this station than is convenient at this season of the year; but in regard they have both Dunkirk and Calais to look after, I could not well leave a less number. I have nothing more to trouble your grace with, but beg I may hear from you in the Downs, to which place I design towards to-morrow."

In consequence of this representation, the king unwillingly abandoned his hopes of destroying the french armaments in their harbours, and the duke of Shrewsbury conveyed to the admiral his majesty's permission to withdraw from his temporary command.

Accordingly the hero of La Hogue returned, if not with the honours of victory, at least with the gratification of having made his last effort in the salvation of his country; for from this period he retired from active service to take a share in the management of the admiralty, and the direction of public affairs.

CHAPTER 4.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH LORD GALWAY:

1694.

Origin and progress of the House of Savoy—Situation and views of Victor Amadeus—His accession to the grand alliance, and subsidiary treaties with the maritime powers—Operations of the war from 1690 *to* 1694*—Mission and death of the duke of Schomberg—Lord Galway appointed embassador and commander of the auxiliary forces in Italy—Siege and capture of Casale—Ambiguous conduct of the duke of Savoy—Correspondence during the campaign of* 1695.

AMONG the interesting transactions of the ministry of the duke of Shrewsbury, were the accession of the duke of Savoy to the grand alliance, which gave a new character to the war; and his secret accommodation with France, which may be considered as the first breach in that extensive confederacy, and one of the chief and immediate causes which led to its dissolution.

The incessant struggle which had long been maintained between France and the House of Austria, for the mastery of Italy, had given consequence to the princes of Savoy, whose alliance was courted by both parties. This family, like an alpine torrent, had risen from a trifling source, and increased into comparative grandeur, by a gradual accumulation of territory, and the possession of the chief passes of the Alps, separating Italy from France. Frequent and long animosities, joined to the domineering spirit of the spanish sovereigns, in possession of the Milanese, had driven the princes of Savoy into a connection with France, which was cemented by several intermarriages. The usual consequences attended this unequal union; for under various pretences, France had reduced her weaker ally into a state of dependence, and had secured possession of some of the fortresses; and of these, in particular, Pignerol was the most important, be-

cause it at once covered the french frontier, and opened a way into Piedmont. To this they had added the possession of Casale, which they had purchased from the duke of Mantua in 1641, and which enabled them still more to awe the House of Savoy.

The recovery of these places had long been a darling object with the prince of Savoy. Promises of restitution had been extorted from France, but these engagements had been as repeatedly eluded.

Victor Amadeus, the reigning sovereign, had succeeded his father, Charles Emanuel, at the age of eleven, in 1675; and his earliest wish, on the expiration of his long minority, was, to regain the barriers of his country, and to assume that consequence to which he conceived himself entitled, by the situation and extent of his dominions. Placed between two mighty powers, he not only owed his existence to their mutual jealousies, but was convinced that his hopes of aggrandisement rested on their divisions, by throwing his weight into the scale of either party, from which he could derive the most splendid advantages. His character was well adapted to his delicate situation. He was in the prime of youth and vigour, gifted no less with bodily activity than mental talents, and possessing, in an eminent degree, that profound discernment and dissimulation, which had raised his ancestors above the ordinary race of Italian princes. Though married to a french princess, Anna Maria, daughter of Philip, duke of Orleans, he had long anxiously watched for an opportunity to shake off the bondage of France; and this opportunity occurred in the war which spread over every part of Europe, in consequence of the Revolution that placed William prince of Orange on the throne of England.

With his characteristic caution, Victor Amadeus paused till he could ascertain the probable event of the struggle, while he listened to the proposals of both parties. But the advance of a french army towards Piedmont, under marshal Catinat, and the peremptory demand that he should disband his forces, and yield the temporary occupation of Verrua and the citadel of Turin, as a pledge of his fidelity, left to so high-minded a prince no other

alternative than to put his fate to hazard, by accepting the overtures of the allies. Accordingly, in the beginning of June, 1690, he signed a treaty of alliance with the king of Spain, as sovereign of Milan, and with the emperor Leopold; and was negotiating a subsidiary treaty with the maritime powers.

This spirit of resistance drew on him the vengeance of the french court, which was announced in a declaration of war on the 13th of June. The duke hastily collected his national troops, and, assisted by the spaniards, prepared to vindicate his independence; but, new to war, he was unable to contend with the matured skill of Catinat, and, after a bloody battle, was, on the 13th of August, defeated at Staffarda. His misfortunes were aggravated by the loss of Saluzze and Suza, and the investment of Coni, which was considered as an outwork of Turin. At the same time all Savoy was reduced except Montmelian; and a body of french troops penetrating into the valley of Aosta, threatened to force a passage through the territory of Vercelli into the Milanese.

In this perilous state, prince Eugene, who commanded a corps of imperialists in Piedmont, hastened to Vienna, to demand instant succours; and the duke himself privately repaired to Milan, to concert some means of prompt deliverance, with the marquess of Leganez, the spanish commander. King William also had marked with an anxious eye the perils of an ally, whose co-operation was so necessary to the safety of Italy, and sent Charles, duke of Schomberg, who inherited the military talents as well as the honours of his illustrious father, with a retinue of experienced officers, to give energy to the exertions, and direct the councils of the brave but inexperienced sovereign. Schomberg arriving on the 6th of June, 1691, found the duke of Savoy returned from Milan, in a state bordering on despondency; for in the interim Villa Franca, Nice, and Veillane had successively been captured, and Carmagnola was reduced to offer a capitulation. The people participated in his anxiety and alarms; for the french partisans had over-run and devastated the country; and the destruction of the palace of Rivoli spread such terror, that the

capital itself was deemed in imminent danger. The royal family sought a refuge at Vercelli, while the citizens hastened to remove their most valuable effects.

In this instance, as in many others, the vigour of a superior mind restored spirit and energy, and changed the aspect of affairs. Schomberg first exerted himself to re-establish discipline among the refugee troops in the pay of the maritime powers; and encouraged the duke of Savoy to challenge the enemy in the open field, by attacking the foragers of Catinat, whose army was weakened by the force employed in the siege of Coni. By this success the duke was led to new enterprises. He was persuaded to despise the threatened attack from the side of Aosta, which had hitherto occupied his attention, and to direct his grand effort for the relief of Coni, which was desperately defended, by a small but undaunted garrison. Prince Eugene at this critical moment returned from Vienna, and was intrusted with the direction of this daring enterprise. Skirting the plain in which the place is situated, with 2,000 horse, he assembled 6,000 of the national militia at Mondovi, and terrifying the enemy by his intrepid advance, they hastily raised the siege, abandoning their artillery, stores, and all their sick and wounded.

In consequence of this brilliant success, the french withdrew from the valley of Aosta; and Catinat, having reinforced the garrison of Casale, fell back to Villa Nova d'Asti. Soon afterwards a contingent of 18,000 germans arrived, under the command of the margrave of Baden; and the confederates had not only the satisfaction of driving the french back towards their own frontier, but of closing the campaign, by the recovery of Carmagnola, which surrendered to Eugene on the 2nd of December. This success was, however, in some degree balanced by the loss of Montmelian, the key of Savoy, which opened its gates to the enemy on the 21st of the same month.

The ensuing year Victor Amadeus joined prince Eugene in an invasion of Dauphiné; but the expedition produced no other effect than the devastation of the country; for the duke was attacked with the small-pox, which rendered him unable to exert

himself in the field, and the spaniards refused to prosecute operations beyond the Alps. The winter was spent in preparations, and the duke again joined the army in the middle of July, 1693. But this campaign also was marked by new disasters. The allies made an unsuccessful attempt on the french fort of St. Bridget, blockaded Casale, and bombarded Pignerol; but at this crisis they were attacked at Marsiglia by Catinat, and defeated with great slaughter. The most fatal loss was, however, the death of the gallant duke of Schomberg, who was mortally wounded, and whose spirit had hitherto given energy and consistency to the military operations. The consequence of this misfortune was the immediate invasion of Piedmont, which was desolated by fire and sword, in retaliation for the excesses committed during the preceding irruption into Dauphiné.

In 1694, both parties appeared exhausted with the preceding efforts, and the campaign in Italy, from the same causes, partook of the same inactive character as those on the Rhine, and in the Netherlands; for the only operation of consequence, was a faint attempt to hasten the reduction of Casale,* which had been so long blockaded.

We find no documents in the Shrewsbury papers to elucidate the events of these campaigns, but we are fortunately enabled to trace in more detail, the operations of 1695 and 1696, and in particular, to develope the circumstances which preceded and accompanied the defection of the duke of Savoy. These lights are furnished by the letters of lord Galway, who was deputed to Piedmont, in the character of embassador, and commander of the auxiliary forces in the pay of the maritime powers, in the room of the duke of Schomberg.

This nobleman was a native of France, derived from the illustrious family of Ruvigny; and after distinguishing himself, as head of the french protestants, had quitted that country on the revoca-

* Muratori Annali d'Italia, ann. 1690, 1691, 1692, 1693, and 1694.—Kennett's History of England, and Tindal's Continuation.

tion of the edict of Nantes. He experienced a cordial reception from the prince of Orange, whom he accompanied on his expedition to England; and after the Revolution was accomplished, he was naturalised, and intrusted with a military command in Ireland. By his skill, courage, and activity, he greatly contributed to the defeat of the Jacobite party, and the reduction of that kingdom. His services were rewarded with the rank of lieutenant-general, the command of the refugee regiment of horse, vacant by the death of the duke of Schomberg, and the title of viscount Galway. His frankness and spirit endeared him to William, who employed his varied talents, as well in negotiation as in action. He was accordingly selected for the critical post of embassador to the duke of Savoy, where he united the diplomatic with the military character; and was considered, not only as the most proper person to give energy to the operations in Italy, but to detect the wiles of so cautious and artful a prince as Victor Amadeus.

The british government made unusual efforts for the campaign of 1695, in Italy, and anticipated important consequences from its result. The powerful fleet under admiral Russell, which had saved Barcelona, and averted the dangers that menaced the western parts of Spain, was now at liberty. The winter had been employed by the admiral, in putting the ships into excellent order; a body of 4,000 landmen were embarked; and while the french squadrons were retained by fear in the harbour of Toulon, the british flag was triumphant in the Mediterranean, and the fleet appeared off Finale, ready to receive a body of troops, and cooperate in any enterprise on the coasts of France or Italy. The spaniards, relieved from nearer perils, had re-inforced their army in the Milanese, the emperor had increased his contingent, and the auxiliaries in the pay of the maritime powers, received an accession of strength. The duke of Savoy had collected a more powerful and better appointed army, than at any period since the commencement of the war; and it was hoped, that a sense of gratitude for his past deliverance, as well as his own chivalrous

spirit, would prompt him to forego all petty interests, and promote with zeal, the enlarged views of the confederacy, in which his own welfare was essentially involved.

The two contending parties thus stood on more equal terms than at any preceding period. The french monarch had been compelled to diminish his forces in other quarters, in order to strengthen his army in the Netherlands; and in Italy his means had been still farther straitened, by the necessity of disposing troops to protect Toulon and Marseilles; and those points of the Italian coasts which he still occupied. Such was the situation of affairs at the opening of the campaign, when the correspondence with the duke of Shrewsbury commences. The first letter from lord Galway, ably delineates the character of the duke of Savoy, presents a statement of the forces employed by the contending powers, and concludes with some general remarks on the proposed operations of the campaign.

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Camp before Casale, May* 31-*June* 10, 1695.—I am much obliged to you for the honour of your information, that the affairs of this country are, at present, in your department. I shall have great pleasure in sending you an account of what passes in this court, and receiving your orders, for I hope you will have the goodness to give me occasional instructions.

"You know, my lord, that the duke of Savoy is a prince of great application to war and politics, very penetrating, and very difficult to be penetrated. This last peculiarity of his character would make me appear very bold, if I ventured to answer for his inclination, not only to a separate, but also to a general peace; but I judge of the sincerity of his words and actions, by his own interests, with which he is well acquainted; and I think I can assure you, that all the princes of the league may rely certainly on his firmness. He is a prince who wishes to be master, and nothing pleases him like the command of a large army, and many troops at his disposal. He pays, at present, twenty-seven battalions, four companies of his guards, two regiments of cavalry, and

three of dragoons; and we may estimate his effective force at 15,000 foot, and 2,500 horse. The spaniards have 8,000 foot, and 3,000 horse; the imperialists, 8,000 foot, and 4,500 horse. Thus we may reckon on 30,000 infantry, and 10,000 cavalry, of whom we must leave in the Milanese, in the quarters of the imperialists, and in the fortresses of Piedmont, at least 8,000 infantry, and 1,000 horse; so that we may bring into the field, about 30,000 men. Under the orders of M. Catinat, in the provinces bordering the Alps, there are 50,000 foot, and 4 or 5,000 horse, without reckoning the "Troupes de la marine," who are in Provence, under the orders of M. de Tourville, and who will not leave the coasts.

"If our affairs were directed by a single and skilful head, we should at least be able to give some annoyance to the enemy; but although our chiefs are men of great merit, and perfectly well intentioned, they cannot think alike, nor have they the same interests, and it were to be wished that we had generals of greater experience.

"We are at present engaged in projects for the siege of Casale; for it is true, that if we do not undertake it, there is great appearance we shall spend this campaign, as we did the other, without doing any thing. But it is certain, that if we finish our lines and establish a blockade, as we ought, we shall soon be masters of it without expense, without loss of men, and without risk; and if we persist in the design of besieging it, we shall encounter many difficulties, we shall lose many men, and much time; and the enemy in the interim will take Demont, which will give them a third entrance into Piedmont. It is even to be feared that in the later season, they may still farther avail themselves of the weakness to which this siege will have previously reduced our infantry. However, since it has been determined to undertake the siege, though I was of a contrary opinion, I urge our generals, as much as possible, to adopt a decided part; for in speaking perpetually of the siege, we forget the lines, and take no measures elsewhere. I much fear, indeed, that we shall not undertake the siege, that we shall not finish the lines, and shall pass the campaign in the vicinity of Casale. After that, if the enemy chuse to attempt any thing in

Piedmont, we shall not find ourselves in a condition to oppose them, because we shall have adopted no measures for our subsistence in that quarter.

"Such, my lord, is the present state of our affairs. I will do myself the honour of sending you a regular account; and I humbly beg you to impart your sentiments to me, that I may regulate my conduct, for the service of the king, and the advantage and prosperity of the nation."

From this representation, a prognostic might have been drawn of the result of the campaign. In fact the discordant views and interests of the confederates became daily more developed, as they entered into discussion on their intended operations. By the succeeding correspondence, it will appear that the duke of Savoy was chiefly solicitous for the recovery of those fortresses, on which the safety of his country depended; that the austrians and spaniards were no less attentive to their own peculiar advantage; and above all, that the english government, who had made an unusual effort in dispatching the powerful fleet under admiral Russell, to the Mediterranean, were less eager for enterprises which involved the interests of Italy, than to profit by their superiority, and ruin the naval power and commerce of France. Hence, lord Galway not only objected to the siege of Casale, but recommended an attack on Nice, and proposed a co-operation with the troops on board the fleet, to effect a descent against Marseilles or Toulon. These suggestions were strictly in unison with the views of his government, as appears from the approval of the duke of Shrewsbury.

"*Whitehall, June* 28-*July* 8, 1695.—My lord; By the last post, I received your's of the 31st of May, and 3rd of June, our style. You will, I hope, expect no directions from hence; his majesty, from whom alone all those will come, being in Flanders, to whom I do not doubt but your lordship gives constant accounts, and receives his majesty's orders by the hands of Mr. Blathwayt.

"Our good wishes attend all your undertakings; but if any thing could be attempted upon the sea-ports of France, and particularly upon Toulon, with the help of any number of your troops, it is so plain it would be more our interest, than any other thing that can be done, that I am sure it need not be mentioned to your lordship; and I confess, I think nothing could be executed more advantageous to the allies in general, than the ruining the french force at sea, because nothing would more certainly oblige them to a reasonable peace. We are informed by all our intelligence, that they have troops both at Toulon and Marseilles, to prevent a descent, which might not only destroy their towns, but, what we are much more concerned to effect, their gallies and ships; but the question is, whether they have such a force, if the fleet should present itself before both places at once, in such a manner as they could not distinguish which were intended to be attacked, their troops would be so divided, that the whole strength could not be brought to oppose a landing. You will excuse my ignorant thoughts upon this subject, and believe me, with great truth," &c.

Failing in his endeavours to procure the co-operation of the allies in an enterprise against Toulon or Marseilles, lord Galway next recommended the siege of Nice. His proposal, however, was rejected, and a resolution adopted, to press the siege of Casale, which, though taken in a council of war, was contrary to the sense of the majority.* The only use which could now be made of the british fleet was, to alarm the coasts of France, though without attempting to effect a descent. On this disappointment the noble secretary thus expresses his extreme regret.

"*Whitehall, July* 5-15, 1695.—My lord; I have received your lordship's of the 10th of June, O. S., and with it, an account that the siege of Casale is resolved. I could wish something had been

* See p. 262.

undertaken, in which our fleet would have been useful, and that might more immediately have tended to our chief end, the destroying the french power at sea, and not less to the general advantage of the allies; but since your lordship's arguments could not prevail to effect that, which would have been so welcome here, we must content ourselves; and wish good success to the present design. I am," &c.

In conformity with the resolution adopted in the council of war, the confederate army marched towards Casale, and converted the blockade into a siege. It was expected, however, from the strength of the place, and the number of the garrison, that a considerable resistance would be made; and it was likewise apprehended that the french might advance to its relief, before the garrison should be intimidated into a capitulation. Great, therefore, was the surprise of the confederate generals, when the french commandant offered a surrender on the 10th of June, before any breach was effected, and after an attack of only 13 days.

Such an unexpected result could not but awaken suspicions in the mind of lord Galway, of some secret understanding between the duke of Savoy and France; and the impression was strengthened by the terms of capitulation. The town was to be transferred to the duke of Mantua, its original sovereign; the works of the place were to be demolished by the allies; and those of the citadel by the french, who were to hold it in garrison till the demolition was completed. Hostages were exchanged for the fulfilment of these conditions, which obviously enabled the french to maintain their footing, by protracting the rasure of the works, while they afforded a pretext to the duke of Savoy for declining farther operations.

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Camp before Casale, July* 1-11, 1695.—My lord; I apprised you that I did not expect so great a resistance here, as was apprehended. The enemy beat the chamade on the 13th day after the opening of the trenches, and we were only at the foot of the glacis.

It is true, they are allowed the demolition of the whole place, town, citadel, and castle, and they are permitted to remain until all this is done. This extraordinary capitulation was granted without much opposition on the part of his royal highness, because he desires the demolition more ardently than the french. I shall endeavour to send you the articles of the capitulation, if not to-day, by the first post. My lord," &c.

These suspicious circumstances could not, likewise, escape the serious consideration of the king and minister, nor were they ignorant of the rumours and inferences to which the conduct of the duke of Savoy gave rise; but, as if unwilling to anticipate circumstances so fatal, they evidently struggled against their own conviction; and not only calculated on the fidelity of their Italian ally, but fondly dwelt on the prospect of a future and more successful campaign. These feelings are strongly expressed in a letter from the duke of Shrewsbury.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD GALWAY.

"*Whitehall, July* 23, 1695.—My lord; By the last post, I had your lordship's of the 28th of June, and 1st of July, * * * * * *

"I suppose before this his majesty will have given you an account what he intends relating to the fleet in the Mediterranean; but, least the hurry of business he is in should make him forget it, I have taken the liberty to put him in mind of giving his orders upon that subject. If it could have been foreseen that this business of Casale would have ended so soon, the year is not so far advanced, but something of consequence might have been attempted now, with the assistance of our fleet; but if the concerting of measures will take up too much time, to leave us any hopes for this summer, something ought to be laid that might be undertaken early the next Spring; and the Spaniards ought to be made sensible that the continuing our fleet in those seas, is of such consequence to them, that they ought, for their own interest, to refuse nothing they are able to do to engage the king to it. For my own part, I am satisfied with every circumstance of the conclusion of

the siege of Casale, unless the method of treating has occasioned some suspicion. The keeping the town fortified might have given more jealousy among the allies than the place is worth, therefore I am not sorry it is demolished; but some give out that the treaty was carried on between his royal highness and the french, as if it looked like a thing concerted before; and such private understandings give ground to suspect that this does but forerun another accommodation of worse consequence to the common cause. But your lordship, who is upon the place, and sensible of the importance it is to prevent any such under-hand bargain, will observe, and beside using your own endeavours to stop it, will give notice to his majesty, if you find cause to suspect there is any treaty on foot for a separate peace."

Leaving a corps of 3,000 men for the demolition of the works of Casale, the duke of Savoy rejoined the army, professing a readiness to co-operate in any undertaking for the humiliation of the common enemy. He even assented to the proposal of the british general for detaching 5,000 men to act in conjunction with the troops on board the fleet; but he well knew that such an attempt was now rendered hopeless, by the preparations of the french court; for he still acted on the same system of rendering the operations of the campaign subservient to his peculiar interest, by insisting on the siege of Pignerol, which could not be undertaken till the ensuing Spring.

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Camp near Casale, July* 19-29, 1695.—My lord; I write twice a week to the king and to Mr. Blathwayt, from whose letters I receive his majesty's orders. But I know it is also my duty to inform you of what passes here, which I do with pleasure; and whenever your affairs will allow it, or when matters render it necessary, I hope you will favour me with your instructions.

"You will, I trust, have seen, my lord, that I have done all in my power to engage the chiefs to use all their efforts toward the sea, to profit by the superiority of our fleet; but there was no

arrangement for provisions or artillery in that quarter, and it was too late to make any. Since the capture of Casale, however, I have proposed to give a number of troops to join those in the fleet, and it has been resolved to send 5,000 men. I have informed the admiral, that they are offered to him in case he should deem it possible to undertake any thing with this corps. I know Mr. Russell's answer; it is, that he undertakes to protect them by sea, and carry them to the coast; but it is for the officer commanding them to form the project, chuse the place for making a descent, and concert with him the measures to be taken at sea. After having well examined the dispositions of the enemy on the coast, I think a descent impracticable. There are fifteen hundred cavalry in the fosses of Toulon, ten thousand infantry in the neighbourhood of that town and Marseilles, and twenty thousand in the rest of Provence or in the county of Nice. You are aware, my lord, that when the enemy are apprised that a detachment is made from this army, to embark at Finale or at Oneglia, they also will advance under Toulon or Marseilles a more considerable corps than ours can be. For as we aim only at those two places, they will think solely of defending them. They are only ten leagues distant from each other by land, and by sea more than twenty. So that the same corps of troops may easily maintain both places, especially if they have a stronger in the rear, to advance only on an urgent emergency; because the country, far from abounding in provisions, is very poor. We cannot unite for such an enterprise until after the conquest of Nice. I wish that from this moment we should devote all our cares to its accomplishment next year. But if we are competent to a great enterprise, his royal highness will ever be disposed for that of Pignerol; and indeed the reduction of that place would greatly facilitate all the other operations. In a few days I think I shall be able to give you a more exact account, for we are to have a council on this business. I request your protection, my lord, and beg you to be assured that I shall ever be," &c.

The duke of Savoy artfully contrived to waste the season in

deliberation, by summoning a council of his generals at Turin, to determine on farther operations. He, however, evinced his determination to persist in the reduction of Pignerol, which was calculated to delude the british government into the hope that the possession of that place would lead to the accomplishment of their wishes: He so far succeeded, that we find lord Galway expressing a partial approbation of the design, and the duke of Shrewsbury dwelling on the resumption of the project against the french coast and marine.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD GALWAY.

"*Whitehall, Aug.* 16-26, 1695.—My lord; I received your's of the 19th and 25th together. I am sorry the want of preparations, and other defects make any attempt upon the sea coast of France impracticable this year. Since his majesty has resolved to be at the expence and hazard of maintaining a great fleet the next summer in the Mediterranean, I hope some scheme will be laid for the annoying the french power at sea against the next year; and that the duke of Savoy and the other allies will so justly consider the vast charge England is at, for providing their fleet at this distance, that they will concur in some design that may be for our safety and advantage."

The result of the deliberations at Turin is thus communicated by lord Galway:

"*Turin, Aug.* 3-13, 1695.—My lord; I came hither to be present at a council of war, composed of all the general officers, to deliberate on what was to be done during the rest of the campaign. There being no news from our fleet, and no arrangement for provisions on the coast, it was the general opinion, that nothing should be undertaken on that side; and there is neither sufficient infantry nor artillery for the siege of Pignerol. Hence all agreed that the infantry should be collected: they are much diminished by disease, and cannot amount to more than 20,000 men. We are to endeavour to drive M. de Catinat from the heights, which

he occupies with 30,000 men, and to attack Susa. I think the latter affair no easier to execute than the former, and consequently do not imagine it will be accomplished."

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Surprised to hear that the english fleet is to winter in the Mediterranean, as no measures have been taken for that arrangement—The duke of Savoy anxious for the siege of Pignerol—Does not believe the rumour of a treaty between him and the french.]

"*Camp near Casale, Aug.* 16-26, 1695.—My lord; By the post which brought me your letter of the 23rd July, I received one from Mr. Blathwayt and one from M. de la Tour, from which I learn that our fleet is to winter in the Mediterranean. Of this neither his royal highness nor myself were aware, and no measures have consequently been taken, in reference to that arrangement. I wrote to admiral Russell during the siege of Casale, and immediately afterwards, but have had no letters from him, since that from Cape Rosas, dated 21st May, your style. The season being so far advanced, nothing can be undertaken until next year; and we ought to be apprised by what time our fleet may be expected off Nice, or at least off Toulon. His royal highness, as I have already informed your excellency, is wholly bent on the siege of Pignerol, in the hope that he may obtain that place by treaty, if it be not taken before peace is concluded. It is true, if we had Pignerol, we should be at liberty to re-take what we chose, as we should have nothing to fear from Piedmont. It has been resolved to attack Susa, and nothing is wanting but orders from the emperor; but I think this enterprise impracticable. To effect it, the french must be driven from all the heights between Pignerol and this place, which they occupy with sixty battalions, amounting to more than 20,000 infantry: we, I think, can collect no more than 18,000. Respecting the capture of Casale, the same rumours current in England of a secret treaty, have been spread here. I have endeavoured to trace their origin, and I cannot think them true. All that has been said has been so contradictory, that I see clearly they rest only on the feeble defence made

by the french, and on the conditions too promptly granted. But they were disposed to ensure its total demolition, and testify to the princes of Italy how much they had their interests at heart; and perhaps they were not sorry to create this occasion for dissension among the allies."

The succeeding letters strikingly display the embarrassment of the british ministry, and the false calculations which they formed on the future co-operation of the duke of Savoy, in their darling design for the ruin of the french marine.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD GALWAY.

[Hopes that some expedition against the coast of France will be concerted with the duke of Savoy.]

"*London, Sept.* 6-16, 1695.—My lord; I doubt your lordship is but too much in the right, that the season of the year was so far advanced, before the certainty came of his majesty's fleet being designed to winter at Cadiz, that it was too late to make any considerable project for them to act in conjunction with his royal highness's troops after the taking of Casale. We must, therefore, now content ourselves with what is possible, and endeavour to lay some scheme for the next summer's service this winter, whilst there is time to concert and agree it with the several princes concerned. Your lordship can judge better what is practicable than any body can here at this distance, and therefore I hope you will employ your thoughts upon it, and endeavour to dispose matters, so that what is intended to be attempted, may turn to the advantage and the security of England, by weakening the french strength at sea, as well as to the benefit of the duke of Savoy and the other allies; it being very reasonable that the hazard we expose our ships to, and the expense his majesty is at, should be considered so far, as that, in the designs for the next campaign, his majesty's interest should not be forgot. * * * * *

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Will use his endeavour that Nice should be attacked instead of Pignerol next campaign —Thinks that the wishes of the duke for the siege of Pignerol should not be too rashly opposed—Duke of Savoy recovered from his indisposition and will join the army—Dispersion of the English fleet by a storm off the coast of Provence—The french garrison has evacuated Casale.]

"*Turin, Sept.* 10-20, 1695.—My lord; I am honoured with your letters of the 16th and 23rd of August, and shall use all my efforts to cause the enterprise of Nice to be adopted for next year, instead of that of Pignerol. God grant we may achieve one of them. Neither of them is without its difficulties. The latter is much more to the taste of his royal highness, and much more to his interests; wherefore, I think that no obstinate contradiction should be offered to his sentiments. This conquest, also, would be very advantageous to the whole league, though there is no comparison with regard to us; for nothing is so much to our advantage, as that which tends to destroy, or, at least, to diminish the maritime power of France. I shall do all I can for that object.

"His royal highness is in better health; I think he will be well enough to go to the army in two or three days. His illness greatly incommoded public business.

"The garrison of Casale evacuated that place on the 18th, N. S., to the number of 2,200, leaving 300 sick.

"Our fleet has encountered a terrible storm on the coast of Provence. If the wind had continued east, it would probably have gone on shore; but the wind shifting to the north-west, the fleet disappeared, and we have had no certain intelligence of it since the storm. The french still speak of the armaments which they are preparing at Toulon; but the season is so advanced, that I do not think their ships will go out of port this year."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD GALWAY.

[Thinks an attempt against Nice preferable to the attack of Pignerol—Will send his majesty's instructions on his arrival in England—Hopes that the duke of Savoy will agree to the attack of Nice, should the king approve it.]

"*Whitehall, Oct.* 4-14, 1695.—My lord; I received your letter of the 2nd Sept., our style, whilst I was in the country, and your's of the 10th since my return hither. What I writ of my inclination to the attempt against Nice, rather than Pignerol, was purely my own private opinion, without orders. When the king arrives, I will endeavour to send you his directions, unless you may perhaps have received them already, by some other hand, or that he will please to take the pains to do it himself. If Nice be more favourable to that which ought to be our main end, of weakening the french force at sea, as you agree it is, and will at the same time be of advantage to the duke of Savoy, though it should not be so exactly to his mind as Pignerol; yet the expense the king is at for maintaining part of his war by land, and the vast charge and hazard undergone by continuing such a fleet in the Mediterranean, ought, in my judgment, to incline his royal highness to some complaisance to his majesty's interest. I do not doubt, when you know the king's thoughts, but you will use arguments that may prevail, much better and stronger than I am able to suggest, and therefore shall at this time trouble you no more than to assure you that I am," &c.

As the rest of the campaign was inactive, and the troops were distributed at the proper season into winter quarters, most of the succeeding letters possess little interest, and merely refer to the topics already discussed. William, finding it fruitless to struggle against the inclinations of the duke of Savoy, prudently acquiesced in the proposed attack of Pignerol, though he considered it as scarcely practicable. He, like his minister, vainly hoped that this compliance would ensure the fidelity of the duke, and eventually win his concurrence in the prosecution of operations against the french coasts.

We cannot, however, omit to point out a few letters, which evince the artful policy of the duke of Savoy, who, while he was secretly caballing with France, was endeavouring to extort the government of the Milanese, and pecuniary contributions from Spain, at the same time that he laboured to excite a suspicion that the court of Madrid was treating with France for a separate peace. We confess we cannot restrain our surprise that this double dealing should fail to awaken the suspicions of lord Galway, or escape the penetrating eye of king William. Such, however, was the case, and we find them doubting, yet still confiding in the sincerity of this wily prince.

The first of these letters announces the arrival of the papal nuntio, through whose agency the accommodation was arranged; and the profound policy of the court of Rome is displayed in the choice of a minister, who clothed his political intrigues under the veil of a devotion to pleasure, and in the midst of pursuits apparently frivolous, was actively employed in settling the terms of a treaty which endangered the safety of the protestant cause. The affected dislike with which he was at first received, is another of those refined arts, that enabled the duke of Savoy to mature his design, without awakening the suspicion of those by whom his conduct was so sedulously watched. It is no less striking to observe the art with which the duke continued to lure the english government, with the hope of rendering his dominions the center of an advantageous commerce with the shores of the Mediterranean. As we proceed, the plot thickens, and every letter furnishes new proofs of his consummate duplicity.

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Turin, Dec.* 31-*Jan.* 10, 1695-6.—My lord; The count de Vernon* has been with me, by order of his royal highness, to give me an account of his journey; and the purport of his statement is: 1st, To shew me the justice of what he has demanded, viz. the payment of the arrears of subsidies, which his highness pretends to

* The envoy sent by the duke to the court of Spain.

be due to him, and of the equivalents which he has proposed, such as receiving in payment the cannon of Casale, or the valley of Sesia; for he told me nothing of the demand he had made of the government of the Milanese.

"2nd, How much the ministers of Spain are indisposed to render justice to his royal highness; since, instead of entering into the consideration of those equivalents, they have denied the greater part of the debt, and have declared that they will never contribute or consent to the aggrandisement of that prince, nor even wish him to command a great body of troops; and that consequently they are resolved no longer to assist with money, but rather to furnish their own troops, in order to be masters of the operations.

"3rd, That the sentiments of these ministers are not so much the effect of a political view for the preservation of the Milanese, as of the party which the french have in Spain, and which, he says, is very considerable; almost all the council being wholly inclined for peace. This was apparent when the matter was debated: of nine ministers, there were seven for peace; only one for the continuance of the war, and another who gave no opinion. This point was warmly urged, and M. de Vernon strenuously endeavoured to persuade me that those ministers would at length lead the king to a separate peace.

"4th, He spoke much to me of the good offices of the king's ministers, and of the obligation which his royal highness felt to his majesty, for the positive orders which the king had given to support his interest on all occasions.

"On all these articles I said every thing I could imagine, in excuse for the conduct of the spaniards; not with regard to the government of Milan, but towards his royal highness; and especially in relation to a separate peace, so contrary to their interests; and I endeavoured to prove the impossibility of making such a peace. Lastly, admitting the justice of his master's pretensions, I told him, that as soon as the affair of M. Schonemberg was finished, it would be advisable for his royal highness to let me know what he would desire the king to do, to enable him to obtain his objects.

"It was my wish to speak to his royal highness on all this conversation; but that prince told me it was not necessary, and that he very well perceived the whole would be settled with the spaniards; that he was however very glad I was informed of all things; and especially of his great obligations to the king, in order to charge me to assure his majesty of his gratitude. I shall take an opportunity of conferring with him more deeply on this matter, though the spanish envoy does it every day; for we must endeavour to destroy the bad impression made on him by the count de Vernon. That minister, perhaps not well disposed, is certainly dissatisfied with the ill success of his negotiation, and has neglected nothing to render all the spanish ministers odious to his master.

"The nuntio has made his entry into this city, and yesterday had his public audiences of his royal highness and the duchesses. He is a man who loves his pleasures better than his profession, and thinks of them much more than of his business, for which his royal highness has shewn him little regard. But the party of Rome and of the inquisition is so strong in this country, that this opposition will be overcome, and the prelate will be so managed as to render himself more agreeable to his royal highness. The spanish envoy sees him often, and believes that he shall be acquainted with his negotiations."

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the business of commerce—State of Spain—Duke of Savoy thinks that the king ought to bear any indignity, and not irritate that court—Letter from the pope, exhorting the duke of Savoy to make peace.]

"*Turin, Jan.* 4-14, 1695-6.—My lord; We had yesterday a long conference with commissioners, appointed by his royal highness for the establishment of commerce. I send a particular account to Mr. Montague, and shall merely tell you, my lord, that the general of the finances, who is one of the commissioners, appears very adverse to this business. I am sure we shall find great difficulties; but as the scheme is a good one in itself, and advantageous to this country, I hope we shall surmount them.

"I have conferred more particularly with his royal highness

on the state of Spain. He judges by the conduct of that court in the affair of M. de Schonemberg, and by the discourses held with Mr. Vernon, that the french party prevails there. For this he accuses the admiral and the marquis de los Balbases; and thinks the queen is governed by the former. He, however, does not appear much offended at this, and the marquis of St. Thomas has spoken to me upon it, as a minister convinced that the spanish monarch must be treated like a friend ill of a frenzy, who must not be abandoned, though he utters insults, and wishes to ill-treat those who serve him."

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The nuntio urges the duke of Savoy to agree to a speedy accommodation; but the duke declines making peace without the unanimous consent of the allies—Rumours concerning the proposed journey of the duke to Milan.]

"*Turin, Feb.* 4, 1696.—My lord; Since my last, I have learned that the nuntio, in his last audience of his royal highness, had much pressed him to promote a peace; and had strongly represented to him the miseries of his people, and the misfortunes of all Italy, from which he intreated him to deliver her; and that his royal highness's answer had been such as we could wish, for he concluded, that peace could not be made without the unanimous consent of all the allies.

"His royal highness is to go to Milan towards the end of this month, N. S. This journey gives rise to much discussion, and it has long been spoken of; but I think it merely a journey of pleasure, which this prince takes annually. I shall not deem it proper to go, unless he tells me, and I do not imagine he will speak of it.

"The french intelligence still adverts to the armament at Toulon.

"M. Catinat returns to command the french army in this quarter, with eight lieutenant-generals, and ten marshals de camp. The french are making greater magazines of corn, flour, and oats, at Pignerol and Fenestrelles, than usual."

CHAPTER 5.

1695—1696.

Recall of the british fleet from the Mediterranean—Developement of the private machinations of the duke of Savoy—His secret intelligence with France, and pilgrimage to Loretto—Projects for the ensuing campaign, and artifices employed by the duke to deceive the allies—Correspondence from February to April, 1696.

IN the midst of the perplexity which paralysed all the efforts of the confederates in Italy, the extensive preparations of France for a descent on the english coasts, and the machinations of the Jacobites to prepare the way for a counter-revolution, obliged king William to recall the fleet from the Mediterranean, and to leave the french masters of that sea. This measure furthered the purposes of France with the duke of Savoy; and we soon find the wily prince resorting to new and more active intrigues, to obtain his darling objects, and effect his secession from the grand alliance.

In reviewing the campaign of 1695 we find every symptom of approaching defection in the duke of Savoy. No active measure was undertaken, except the siege of Casale; and the surrender of that place was owing, not to the exertions of the allies, but to connivance with the french. From the letters of lord Galway it appears that a total want of concert reigned among the confederate chiefs; and that the whole season was spent in forming projects, either impracticable in themselves, or never intended to be carried into execution; for the duke of Savoy in particular would listen to no proposal, except the siege of Pignerol, which he evidently expected to obtain in the same manner as Casale, by his negotiation with France.

Having at length matured his scheme, and procured the terms which he expected, the duke resorted to a new and more refined

artifice to ensure the accomplishment of his purpose. Convinced that all his movements were observed by lord Galway, and fearful of confiding even in his own ministers, he prepared for a pilgrimage to Loretto, under the pretence of a religious vow, made during his late sickness, in order to conclude the preliminary treaty, the terms of which he had previously settled. He thus delivered himself from the presence of lord Galway, whose religion offered a plausible pretext for declining his attendance; and though the british minister employed spies to watch the movements of the court, and even gained some of the subordinate clerks and secretaries, the conclusion of the accommodation was clothed with the same veil of mystery, under which it had been commenced.

At Loretto the duke met a french agent, probably the count de Tesse, under the disguise of a friar, and with him arranged a series of preliminaries. The terms were equal to his most sanguine expectations; for the king of France deemed no sacrifice too great to detach an enemy, who diverted 50,000 of his best troops, and whose defection would spread jealousy through the alliance. He was to obtain the restitution of all his towns and territories conquered by France; the cession of Pignerol rased, and the honours of a crowned head; and above all, his pride was flattered by the arrangement of a future marriage between his eldest daughter and the duke of Burgundy, lineal heir of the french monarchy.

Secretly exulting in the success of his machinations, he returned to Turin, after an absence of fifteen days, and began that system of art and dissimulation, which was necessary to effect his perfect disentanglement from his connection with the allies, without exposing his person and territories to their indignant vengeance. His conduct is minutely described in the letters of lord Galway, whose frank and honest nature was far from suspecting the guile, it was intended to cover.

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Naval armaments at Toulon—Impatient for the arrival of reinforcements to sir George Rooke—The duke of Savoy preparing for a pilgrimage to Loretto—Military preparations.]

"*Turin, Feb.* 7-17, 1696.—My lord; All the advices from Genoa, Leghorn, and France continue to speak of the armament at Toulon. There are already thirty vessels in the road, and they pretend that all the fleet will be ready to sail in the beginning of March. The public, ill enough informed, speak of attacking Barcelona by sea and land, or of passing the Straits. I am impatient to learn that the squadron detained by adverse winds at Spithead is arrived at Cadiz, and has joined sir George Rooke.*

"His royal highness goes, in a few days, to Milan, and thence to Loretto, to fulfil a vow made during his severe illness. It is here thought that this journey must be somewhat mysterious; that the prince will perform another, and that the supposed pilgrimage is merely a pretence.

"The enemy proceed with their magazines at Pignerol, Susa, and Fenestrelles. I think they aim rather at the defence of Pignerol than at entering Piedmont. His royal highness orders the works of the arsenal to go on night and day, and this keeps up the apprehensions of the enemy respecting the intended siege of that place.

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The emperor approves the siege of Pignerol, and will augment his infantry for that object—Tardiness of the imperial recruits.]

"*Turin, Feb.* 8-18, 1696.—The marquis of St. Thomas yesterday read us the dispatches which his royal highness had received from Vienna, in which his embassador gives an account of the conference held on the war, in Piedmont. Lord Lexington,† who was present, has given you a better ac-

* Sir George Rooke had at this time succeeded admiral Russell in the command.

† British minister at Vienna.

count of it than I can. It appears that at Vienna they are satisfied with the enterprise on Pignerol, and to promote its success, the emperor is willing to augment the infantry he has here to 9,000 men, for which purpose he proposes to supply the means of raising 2,500 men, the greater part to be furnished by the dukes of Wirtemberg and Reventlaw. The latter has already declared his inability, and the duke of Wirtemberg prefers giving his men to the Venetians, who pay him fifty crowns, to sending them hither to his regiment, where the emperor pays him only four and twenty. Besides, the season is already so far advanced, that we cannot calculate upon the recruits (however successful they may be) before the end of July, or the beginning of August. The two regiments are promised, which went last year into Catalonia; they were then only 2,000 men; they have lost many in Catalonia, and cannot return into this country without the protection of our fleet. They could not quit Finale last year until very late in the month of June. You see, therefore, my lord, that we cannot have them here before August. The prince of Baden gives us hopes of a regiment of 1,200 men, to replace that of Commercy. This is our best dependance. As to the gunners and bombardiers, the pretended design of the imperialists for a siege in Hungary will prevent them from forwarding all that are demanded: yet I think they will send them; but I am very apprehensive that they will be useless here as well as in Hungary.

"The day of his royal highness's departure is not fixed. They say that M. de Leganes is also going to Loretto. They are expected at Venice. It is still surmised here that there is some mystery in this journey: I do not believe it. We shall know after some time whither they go, and what they are doing. If I am not mistaken, they will be merely trifling; and it will be of no consequence to know the motives of this journey, which will not fail to create speculation."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD GALWAY.

[Laments that the contrary winds have prevented a reinforcement of ships from joining sir George Rooke, and that the preparations at Toulon have obliged the king to recall him.]

"*Whitehall, Feb.* 11-21, 1695-6.—My lord; * * * * This morning waiting upon his majesty, he was pleased to command me to let you know, that contrary winds having blown for 8 or 10 weeks, and stopped the reinforcement of english and dutch ships, which have many of them so long been expecting to sail in order to join sir George Rooke, his majesty has thought it necessary, upon intelligence of the great and sudden preparations at Toulon, to recall sir George Rooke, and to stop the ships till farther orders, that were designed to go from hence to him. Nothing could have happened more unlucky than the perverseness of these westerly winds, for otherwise there might have been a squadron at Cadiz, strong and time enough to have disputed the enemy's passing the Straits, which at present his majesty thinks sir George Rooke will not be in a condition to do; and therefore chuses rather to order him home, than to expose that squadron and our coast to what the french may attempt, especially when they shall have joined their Mediterranean fleet with what they are now fitting out in the Ocean. I am sorry I have no better news to send you, and remain," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD GALWAY.

[Armaments at Dunkirk and Calais—Information that king James has arrived at the opposite coast.]

"*Whitehall, Feb.* 28-*March* 10, 1695-6.—My lord; Yesterday I received your lordship's letters of the 1st, 7th, and 8th. The alarm we are in at present, from the preparations the french make about Dunkirk and Calais, in order to a landing, gives his majesty and every body so much business, that I have not had an opportunity of receiving any directions, if any shall be thought necessary upon them. His majesty's fleet, under the command of Mr. Russell, is in so good a condition,

that I think there is no reason to apprehend any ill consequences from this attempt; but, on the contrary, that we shall be able to disappoint their design with advantage to his majesty's interest. A little time will shew the success, since I conclude at this hour Mr. Russell is upon the enemy's coast. His majesty is certainly informed that king James is at the sea-side, with the marshal de Boufflers, who is to command the troops they can land."

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The journey of the duke of Savoy retarded by indisposition—Armaments at Toulon—Preparations for augmenting the army.]

"*Turin, Feb.* 11-21, 1696.—My lord; Since my last letters, his royal highness has been indisposed, which has retarded his journey to Milan and Loretto. I still think there is no mystery in the business.

"The armament at Toulon continues. Letters from Genoa state, that on the 10th of this month there were twenty-six vessels in the road, that others were fitting out, and advices on all hands affirm, that the fleet will be ready for sea by the beginning of March, N. S.

"M. Catinat must have arrived at Oulx. The gendarmerie who were in Franche Comté have orders to hold themselves in readiness to enter Savoy early in March. The enemy continue the formation of magazines at Pignerol, Susa, and Fenestrelles; and are not making any either at Corp or at Sablons, where they used to have stores for 3,000 horse encamped during the two last campaigns, which they passed on the defensive. From this it is obvious that they design to act offensively in this country, during the present year."

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The duke of Savoy has farther deferred his journey to Loretto—Has desired the decision of the emperor on the siege of Pignerol—Preparations for the continuance of hostilities.]

"*Turin, Feb.* 15-25, 1696.—My lord; His royal highness's journey to Milan and Loretto is deferred till Lent, and will per-

haps be wholly abandoned. He has ordered his embassador at Vienna to obtain instantly a positive answer on the siege of Pignerol, because he will not continue the expense of vehicles for transporting the ammunition which is at Finale, and elsewhere, without being sure of this expedition. I represented to him the advantages which would arise to the allies, from continuing all their preparations, even were it resolved not to form this siege. He seems to think it not convenient for him to incur great expense, simply to attract the enemy into this country, without any useful prospect; yet he assured me he would continue to carry on the works in the arsenal, with the same diligence, and they are actually working there day and night, to prepare every thing that may serve for all occasions, and be applied to other uses, as the casting of cannon, and making of carriages, and every thing else to put the artillery in good condition. By all intelligence from Pignerol, and the enemy's quarters, it appears to me that they are preparing to succour that place, if attacked, rather than to act offensively. They talk, however, of entering the plain before we take the field. They could do us no harm if we opened the campaign early; but that will be somewhat difficult, because we have no stores of corn, nor indeed is there any in the country. The last crops were very bad. Besides, there will be great difficulty in drawing the imperialists out of winter quarters, and the Spaniards will never quit the Milanese, before all the troops of the emperor have passed. This makes me apprehensive that the enemy will profit by our tardiness; and that the season being far advanced, they will enter the plain by the beginning of April, with a corps of cavalry from the troops destined for the Rhine, and bombard Turin, or perform some similar enterprise, being masters of the field; and that they will afterwards retire, before we are assembled, and send their cavalry back to the Rhine, before the prince of Baden has profited by its absence. All our intelligence proves that Catinat strongly menaces this country, and that he has not availed himself of his superior advantages during the course of this war, because he had orders from the king, his master, to spare the states of his royal highness, and is now enjoined to spare no-

thing, but to put all the country to fire and sword, to avenge himself on his royal highness, for having made so many proposals of peace without any effect. These are mere words: we shall judge better by their military dispositions."

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The duke departed for Loretto—Sends Mr. de Vernon to the pope, at Rome—French prepare to pass the mountains into Piedmont.]

"*Turin, Feb. 29-March* 10, 1696.—My lord; * * * * His royal highness sent me, on the first of this month, to Vercelli, to reform one of the battalions in the service of the king. He departed the next day for Milan, and two days afterwards set out for Loretto; he traversed Parma, Modena, and Bologna. He told me, on passing through Vercelli, that his journey would occupy fifteen days, so that I do not expect him here until the fifteenth of this month. However, the enemy have taken the necessary measures to pass the mountains and enter the plain; their gendarmerie and cavalry, who were in winter quarters in Franche Comté, are ordered to be in readiness to march on the commencement of this month. I hope his highness, on his return to Milan, will send hither a detachment of the imperial and spanish troops, which will suffice, with his own, to prevent, at this season, the enterprises of the enemy.

"By this time the Toulon fleet must be at sea, according to the last advices from Marseilles. Letters from Lyons announce that the french have collected at Calais a large armament of fishing vessels and small craft, to transport the troops for the invasion of England; and that king James has posted from Paris to Calais. It is long since I informed you that in Italy they affirmed, that the main design of France this year, was to invade England. I hope we shall be prepared to receive them."

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Laments the recall of the fleet from the Mediterranean—Return of the duke to Turin.]

"*Turin, March* 7-17, 1696.—My lord; * * * * The measure which the king finds it necessary to adopt, of recalling his fleet,

is a misfortune to our affairs in general; as the french are thus relieved from the greatest embarrassment which they have hitherto experienced. It is even to be feared that Spain, being abandoned, will take some evil part, for she is wholly exposed to the enemy. * * * *

"His royal highness arrived yesterday evening; I did not see him, as he retired, on his arrival, rather feverish." * * * *

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD GALWAY.

[The general zeal of the people has encouraged the loyal—Funds settled—The king will soon depart for the continent.]

"*Whitehall, April* 21-*May* 1, 1696.—My lord; The zeal that has been shewed throughout the whole kingdom upon the discovery of this horrid conspiracy* is so general, and so hearty for the preservation of his majesty's person and government, that it is a great encouragement to the honest party; so no doubt it must leave the contrary effect upon the ill-inclined. The parliament will be soon up; the funds all agreed; his majesty at liberty to go over as soon as he pleases, to prosecute the war in Flanders. We want nothing but news of sir George Rooke's safe return, to say every thing in these parts has a most favourable aspect, and I hope a few hours may quiet our minds upon that subject."

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Recommends the return of the fleet to the Mediterranean as the only expedient to encourage Spain, and preserve the trade of the Levant.]

"*Turin, April* 4-14, 1696.— * * * * My lord; permit me to represent to you, that the most important affair is, to think of the fleet which the king would have in the Mediterranean. We must ensure the return of the trading vessels which we have in the Levant; we must ensure all Spain, which is in a great consternation, believing itself abandoned to the discretion of the

* The assassination plot.

french; and we must maintain our credit throughout Italy, which is well established; but we must not suffer the french to recover their's by our weakness. I speak not of the advantage of protecting our trade to the Levant; you hear enough of that in England, where so great a number of vessels are waiting only a favourable opportunity to pass thither, any more than of the necessity of continuing to interrupt the french commerce."

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The french pretend to send detachments into Piedmont, and remain on the defensive elsewhere—Thinks, however, that their principal effort will be made in the Netherlands.]

"*Turin, April* 18-28, 1696.—My lord; By the last advices from France, the gendarmerie, and a part of the cavalry in Franche Comté, have received orders to march on the 24th of this month into Savoy. It appears that the french intend to send into Piedmont about ten or twelve thousand horse, which, as they pretend, are to include the four thousand horse they had in Catalonia, (where they do not propose to have an army in the field this year), with three thousand horse, hitherto under the orders of M. de Catinat during the last campaigns, and encamped in Dauphiné. They will take the rest of this cavalry from the troops, which were destined for the army of the Rhine, where they propose to act solely on the defensive; and with this view they are there augmenting their infantry, and diminishing their cavalry. They can join to that which they profess to have in this country, a great corps of infantry, having still more than one hundred battalions under the orders of M. de Catinat. Yet I do not think they are prepared to make any great progress in Italy, though they will waste it, and prevent us from besieging Pignerol. However, they will not diminish their troops in the Netherlands; and it seems that their principal attention is directed to that country, and to this."

CHAPTER 6.

1696.

Campaign of 1696—*Advance of the French into Piedmont—Movements of the Allies—Continuation of the delusive conduct of the duke of Savoy—His negotiation with marshal Catinat, the french commander—Accepts the offers of France—Concludes a treaty of neutrality—Joins the french army in invading the Milanese—Compels the allies to accede to the neutrality, and the Germans and auxiliaries to withdraw from Italy—Retreat of lord Galway—Correspondence from April to November,* 1696.

WE now reach the campaign of 1696, which, though not fertile in military events, is yet rendered highly important, by the public defection of the duke of Savoy from the grand alliance. It is curious to observe the gradual developement of the profound plot, which he had been so long employed in maturing; and the singular fertility of resource which he evinced in devising pleas for obstructing all military operations, while he testified the greatest alarm at the threatened devastation of his country, and no less eagerness for the reduction of Pignerol, and the prosecution of offensive operations against the enemy. The partial confessions which he affected to make of his negotiations with the nuntio and french generals, are specimens of that dissimulation which the Italians considered as the essence of political science.

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The enemy prepare to enter Piedmont—The Austrians approach the Milanese—Thinks that the french will anticipate the allies in the field.]

"*Ivrea, April* 21-*May* 1, 1696.—My lord; By all the accounts received yesterday, the enemy continue their march towards Piedmont. The gendarmerie are to be on the 6th inst. N. S. at Chambery; besides which, there are thirteen regiments of cavalry and three of dragoons coming from Franche Comté and Savoy.

Infantry and cavalry are also arriving from Catalonia, where the enemy seem to expect no campaign; yet I do not think they will be in a state to undertake the siege of Coni. We cover Turin with the army; but I apprehend they will advance and burn all the country beyond, to the gates of Coni, which would be a great inconvenience, by preventing his royal highness from levying the taxes of that country, the most productive in his dominions, and from putting his troops into winter quarters. I came hither to visit those of the king, and prepare them for taking the field. This day the imperialists enter the Milanese, and cannot reach Piedmont till the 20th. If our fleet were in the Mediterranean, it would make a diversion on the coast of Provence, capable of saving this country."

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Military movements—Comparison of the forces preparing to take the field.]

"*Turin, April* 28-*May* 8, 1696.—My lord; I had the honour to write to your grace some days ago from Aosta; two days afterwards I received his royal highness's orders to march the king's troops: they will be at Pancalle on the 16th, and most of the imperialists, with the troops of his royal highness. The spaniards will not arrive till four or five days afterwards. The enemy profess to enter the plain with ninety-three squadrons. There are fewer battalions under Catinat than I thought: I supposed them to be more than a hundred; but by the lists which we have received, there are only ninety. Yet even this force will be too much for us. If the spaniards are correct, we shall be able to bring into the field about twenty-seven thousand infantry, and nine thousand horse: the enemy will have twelve thousand horse, and forty-five thousand infantry, of which they will keep perhaps ten thousand in the rear; so that they will have eight thousand foot and three thousand horse more than we."

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Advance of the enemy towards Susa—The allied troops assembling—Doubts whether the spaniards will join the army—Laments the superiority of the enemy.]

"*Turin, May* 2-12, 1696.—My lord; By all the advices we have received, the enemy continue their march. The gendarmerie were, on the 10th, at Modane, three days journey from Susa. All the cavalry are following, namely, that of Franche Comté and Savoy. We are not yet informed whether that from Catalonia has passed the Rhône, or even entered Languedoc. The infantry are preparing to join the cavalry. I calculate that in eight days their army will be collected in the plain.

"We are also assembling. All the troops of his royal highness will be at Carignano on the 6th; to the number of fourteen battalions and seventeen squadrons. He places eleven battalions in Coni, with five companies of cavalry. These eleven battalions will send a detachment to Demont. He leaves only one battalion in the citadel of Turin. The imperialists will have joined about the same time. There are already some regiments near Moncallier: the last will arrive on the 18th; but we do not yet know when the spaniards will advance, nor indeed whether they will join us. Hitherto they have always wished to form a separate army. If we cannot persuade the marquess de Leganes to act otherwise, we run great risk. I do not think we can venture to remain on this side the Po; if we post ourselves on the other we abandon Turin to a bombardment; but if they are as strong as is reported, they will probably offer us battle, and we must avoid them. I cannot believe they will undertake the siege of Coni, if we are not beaten. The place is in good condition, with a strong garrison, and well stored with provisions and ammunition.

"Such, my lord, is our situation. If we are skilful enough to avoid an engagement, I think we shall escape with a country ruined and burnt. Yet it were to be wished, that advantage were taken on the Rhine and in Catalonia of the weakness of the enemy; for they have no considerable army, except in the Netherlands and in this country.

"The princess of Carignano lay in on the 10th of a prince, to the great joy of this house and the whole country, his royal highness having no sons.

"The viceroy of Naples, on his return to Spain, arrived here yesterday evening. His royal highness sent the count de Vernon to monsieur de Leganes, to desire him to bring up his troops as expeditiously as possible; and repair hither himself in order to concert the necessary means. I will transmit you an account of all that passes."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD GALWAY.

[Motives which induced the king to withdraw the fleet from the Mediterranean.]

"*Whitehall, May* 22-*June*. 1, 1696.—My lord; *** It is of so great importance, that the king should be master in the Mediterranean, as well upon account of the trade and reputation of this kingdom, as for the encouragement and advantage of the allies, that nothing could have induced his majesty to have withdrawn his ships from Cadiz, but the disappointment he received in several ships, some english, but especially dutch, not being ready so soon as was designed; their being afterwards stopped by long contrary winds, and, lastly, the account of the intended invasion, which was reported to be designed much stronger than it afterwards proved. We hear the french arrived the 6th at Brest, their ships much shattered, and their men very sickly. ***

"The enemy having directed so great a force towards Piedmont, gives us great concern for the success in those parts: if you can be able to stem so violent a stream as seems to be let loose upon you, it is all that can be expected, from your present circumstances. That your success may equal your own desires is the sincere wish of," &c.

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The army assembled—The duke of Savoy abandons his design of covering the capital—Consultation on the post to be taken by the troops.]

"*Turin, May* 9-19, 1696.—My lord; I think, as I have had the honour to inform you, that the enemy will be assembled on this side

of the mountains about the 25th of this month. Their advanced posts are already near Veillano, and the gendarmerie will arrive, it is supposed, this day at Susa. The spaniards are all encamped on the counterscarp of Turin: the imperial cavalry is also all arrived, but the infantry not entirely. His royal highness sends the cavalry forward in two corps, one at Orbassano, and the other towards Rivalta, to consume the forage on the side of the enemy, and preserve our own. They cannot long remain there. It was, as I have mentioned, intended to construct lines before Turin, to prevent a bombardment; but after having well examined this design, it has been found that whatever measures were adopted, we could not obstruct the enemy in bombarding that place from the farther side of the Douro; and that in order to embrace the ground between that river and the Po, we must have extended ourselves too much, and incurred the risk of a battle in those lines, without being able to avoid a bombardment, if it was designed. His royal highness yesterday morning assembled the general officers. It was then resolved to post the army on the other side of the Po; but it is not yet determined, whether it shall all be stationed at Montcallier, or whether the infantry shall be placed behind Turin, in the mountain, to maintain that position and the capital, and the cavalry behind, between the Douro and the Po, from whence it may annoy the enemy by detachments. It will be proper to remain in this situation till we see the course adopted by the enemy."

In the mean-time the secret negotiation had continued with France, and the terms were reduced into the shape of a preliminary treaty. A new and unexpected difficulty, however, now arose. Either from unwillingness to relinquish Pignerol, or from a suspicion of the duke's sincerity, the french objected to the proposed cession, and insisted on retaining that fortress until the conclusion of a general peace; and Grubel, the agent of the duke of Savoy, was induced to consent to this change, and sign the treaty with Tessé, on the 30th of May. The instrument being communicated to the duke, he was indignant at this attempt to

withhold the prize for which he had sacrificed his good faith: he disavowed his agent, refused to affix his ratification, and announced his resolution to prosecute the war.

New measures were now adopted to work on his apprehensions. The negotiation was transferred to Catinat, who had resumed the command of the army, and threats of the most exemplary vengeance were employed to extort his consent. A private communication is even said to have been opened by the agency of St. Thomas, to whom alone the secret was communicated, and who repeatedly repaired, in disguise, to Pignerol, to treat with Tessé and Catinat. At all events, these curious documents were imparted in affected confidence to the ministers of the allies, as a proof of good faith, at the same time that they were still kept in ignorance of the preliminary arrangements. The conduct of the duke, in this instance, was a master-piece of duplicity and address; and he displayed singular art in cajoling the confederate powers, at the very moment when he was meditating their expulsion from Italy.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD GALWAY.

[The british nation are dissatisfied with the operations in Piedmont—Is gratified to hear that his lordship does not believe that any treaty is in agitation.]

"*Whitehall, June* 9-19, 1696.—My lord; I have received your's of the 15th, 18th, and 22nd May, O. S., at which time the enemy had made no motion. But I must inform your lordship we are a sort of people here, that are neither satisfied when they advance, nor when they lie still. When they do the first, we apprehend for you; when they do the last, we are concerned for ourselves, lest it be the effect of some private treaty. I do not observe in any of your lordship's letters, that you have any jealousy of such in agitation, which, nevertheless, we are told is much discoursed and credited at Paris. I give your lordship many thanks for the constant accounts I receive from you, which, at this time, are particularly welcome, from a place where we expect and fear so much."

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[A negotiation opened between the french and the duke of Savoy—Incloses letters which had passed between Catinat and St. Thomas.]

"*Camp of Montcallier, June* 6-16, 1696.—My lord; I send you the copies of a letter which M. Catinat has written to the marquis de St. Thomas, and of the answer of that minister. The marshal has since written another more pressing, by which he demands a decision: I will send you also a copy of it, and the reply.

"His royal highness demurred to gain time, and this reason induced him not to give a positive answer to the first, as he is pleased with an opportunity to prolong the business, and engage in some negotiation, because he cannot prevent the enemy from executing their threats of devastating his country. The french, however, publicly boast that a peace is already concluded with his royal highness; and the Piedmontese, who desire it ardently, speak in the same style. His royal highness is much offended by these rumours. I believe he is too firm and too wise to take a step so injurious to his glory and interests.

"The enemy are still encamped between Rivoli and Rivalta. They have constructed ovens, collected much grain, and are not in want of forage. It is supposed they will remain there some time longer. We also are in the same position as when I had the honour to write."

Our pages are too limited to introduce the correspondence to which reference is here made. We shall only observe, that the letter of Catinat contains the most unqualified threats should the duke of Savoy reject the proffered conditions of peace, and concludes with offering the restitution of his territories, and proposing his co-operation with France in an invasion of the Milanese. The reply of St. Thomas conveys a refusal of the offers, and repels, with affected disdain, so dishonourable a proposal as a joint attack against the allies of his sovereign. To give weight to the declaration conveyed through his minister, the duke soon afterwards addressed a letter to king William, apologising for his nego-

tiation with France, and requesting the return of the british fleet in the Mediterranean. He concluded with soliciting the arrears of his subsidy."

THE DUKE OF SAVOY TO KING WILLIAM.

"*June* 17, 1696.—I doubt not that my lord Galway, whom I have acquainted with what passes here, has sent a very accurate report to your majesty. My duty and inclination, however, impel me to inform you of it myself by this letter, which incloses copies of one from marshal Catinat, and of the answer I ordered to be returned, with his reply and mine. The sentiment of the allied chiefs here, has been, to gain time for keeping the enemy in suspense. This is my view also; and of what shall ensue, I will render a faithful account to your majesty, who will allow me to represent, that if your service would permit it, the return of your fleet to the Mediterranean would be very advantageous to your majesty, and to the good of the common cause, particularly to whatever related to the affairs of this country.

"I humbly intreat your majesty to give the necessary orders, that I may receive, as soon as possible, the subsidy which I enjoy from your royal generosity, assuring you that I never was under so pressing a necessity. It shall be applied solely for the service of your majesty, and of the common cause in this country. I solemnly profess that I will cherish the most ardent zeal for both, and my strongest desire will ever be to endeavour to merit, on all public occasions, the continuation of your majesty's powerful protection, and the honour of declaring myself, with the highest respect and truth," &c.

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Anxious for a fleet in the Mediterranean—Progress of the negotiations between the duke of Savoy and the french—Requests a supply of money for the duke of Savoy.]

"*Camp of Montcallier, June* 9-19, 1696.— * * * * I am glad, my lord, that you are well convinced of the necessity of having a fleet in the Mediterranean; and I am thence induced to hope that the king will send one. The enemy have laid up the squadron,

which sailed from Toulon to Brest, with the exception of twelve ships; so no more than 25 or 30 of their ships are left on the ocean, in three squadrons. Why, then, do we keep in your seas a fleet of 80 sail, and not send a squadron of 25 or 30 into the Mediterranean? If it should please his majesty to order on board only two battalions, he will divert a force of the enemy equivalent to 20,000 men; and change in his favour the aspect of affairs in this country and all Italy.

"Since my last letter marshal Catinat has again written to the marquis de St. Thomas, to which this minister has replied in the manner best calculated to prolong the negotiation. The enemy entered Piedmont with the sole view of engaging his royal highness in a treaty. They are not indeed in a condition to take any fortress; but if they resolve to ruin the whole country, it will be difficult to prevent them; and his royal highness is consequently justified in endeavouring to amuse marshal Catinat, and elude the execution of his threats. However, that prince positively promises not to enter into any separate treaty. I used my utmost endeavours to obtain from him an answer declining all negotiation, that I might never be charged with having consented to the engagement, which appears to be commenced; but I was unable to succeed. And, in fact, his royal highness seems to act rightly, for he will gain every thing, if he can succeed in amusing M. de Catinat three weeks only, in order to give time to the peasantry for collecting their harvest. After that the evil will be trifling; and without it we risk a famine in the country, where the last crops were bad, and the present, which is still on the ground, and of which the harvest is begun, is very good.

"The enemy are still between Rivoli and Rivalta. Should they march even to-morrow, they will be too late to pass the Po and prevent the harvest on this side. On the other side, however, the work is performed at the risk of losing the crops and the cattle employed. I have here a bridge constructed for the retreat of the peasantry; but I cannot protect them in their labours, because they are too distant and too much scattered.

"I will send you a faithful account of our military movements

and political negotiations. His royal highness is in great want of money, as is very natural, for he has never been obliged to incur so heavy an expense. The collection of his revenue has been much retarded by the presence of the enemy; and the payment of his subsidy has never been so long suspended. He has written to the king on the subject. I think, my lord, it is highly important to assist him, if possible, on this occasion, with a prompt supply of money."

In the interim the correspondence between Catinat and St. Thomas continued, and the plot was gradually developed. On the 14th of June the french commander peremptorily required a more specific reply to his former proposals; and in answer, the minister of Savoy, after repeating his refusal of the conditions, proposed a neutrality for Italy, which comprised the virtual secession of his master from the alliance. This overture was promptly accepted, and an offer made to dispatch an agent for a specific explanation of the terms; but from a wish still farther to delude the allies, the reception of the agent was deferred.

The british government, indeed, was so far deceived by the opinion of their own embassador, and the specious declarations of their treacherous ally, that, even at this period, we find the noble secretary of state acquiescing in the negotiation, and expressing his confidence in the good faith of the duke of Savoy.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD GALWAY.

"*Whitehall, June* 30-*July* 10, 1696.—My lord; I have received your's of the 6-16th and 9-19th, and am glad to find it your lordship's opinion, that the duke of Savoy will not conclude any separate peace from the rest of the allies. It was so much his interest to gain time, that he is not to be blamed for hearkening to the proposals the french have made, if he permits the temptation to work no farther on him. I confess I should have been better satisfied in my own judgment, if in that letter where the marquis de St. Thomas mentions the emperor and the king of Spain, with the obligations his royal highness has to them, his majesty's name had been added

also; but there may possibly be good reasons for that omission. I am," &c.

The negotiation with Catinat now rapidly assumed a distinct and consistent shape. He offered, in the name of his master, to purchase the secession of the duke of Savoy, by the surrender of Pignerol rased, and the marriage of his daughter with the duke of Burgundy. He concluded with hinting at other advantages which he declined specifying. These offers were accepted, and St. Thomas was instructed to announce the acquiescence of his sovereign. The duke of Savoy requested either a delay of forty days, or a passport to communicate the information to the courts of Vienna and Madrid. Meanwhile, he pledged himself to retain his own troops and those of the allies on the farther bank of the Po; and proposed to the french commander to confine his forces to the opposite bank; expressing, at the same time, full confidence that he would abstain from any act of hostility.

As the developement of the plot approached, the wily prince redoubled his asseverations of attachment to the allies. On the 4th of July he sent to the emperor a pathetic statement of his deplorable situation, lamented the fatal necessity which had reduced him to accept the offers of France, and artfully argued, that the arrangement he had concluded was no less advantageous to his imperial majesty than to himself. This apology was clothed in the most servile terms of devotion to the Head of the empire; and concluded with a solemn declaration of the lively gratitude he should ever retain, for the obligations he had received from the empire, and a profession no less solemn of a cordial attachment to the interests of his imperial majesty.

His professions are, however, strikingly belied in another epistle addressed to the pope the following day. In this he manifests his real sentiments; for, after adverting to the favourable offers which had been obtained through the medium of his Holiness, he declares, that if the House of Austria will not accede to the proposed neutrality, he will join his forces with those of France to extort their consent. It is no less remarkable, that, although he had obtained

a passport for a messenger to proceed to Madrid, he did not communicate the intelligence of his change of policy to the king of Spain before the 10th of July.

But the most revolting of all his artifices was, his conduct towards the king of England. Grasping to the last moment, he had made an insidious effort to obtain the arrears of his subsidy from the maritime powers, as we have seen by the preceding letter. Before, however, he received a reply to his application, he suddenly threw off the mask, and avowed the conclusion of a treaty, which, under the specious name of a neutrality, bound him not only to quit the allies, but to assist France in the conquest of the Milanese, should they refuse to abandon Italy. The veil which had hitherto blinded the eyes of the british general, was thus abruptly withdrawn; and, in a letter to the duke of Shrewsbury, we find him lamenting his past confidence, and recollecting a long train of duplicity of which he had been an unconscious spectator.

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*July* 7-17, 1696.—My lord; I forward you the letters which were written by M. de Catinat and M. de St. Thomas, since the last which I had the honour to send you, with that of prince Eugene to his royal highness, and his answer. They will inform you of our present state, and of the sequel of a negotiation concerted long ago, as appears from the letters of M. de Catinat and M. de St. Thomas. You will also see that his royal highness had promised fifty days truce, and that Catinat does not chuse to give more than thirty; but this did not hinder the duke from proceeding to discharge the hostages on the 12th. Probably M. de Tessé is now negotiating on the manner of executing a treaty concluded long ago, which is not unattended with embarrassment, for I do not think there can be much confidence on either side; yet our situation here is wretched enough.

"I should be glad to be informed, my lord, what was given in

the last place to M. de la Tour,* what quantity of tallies, and when any are to be paid. Also, whether any subsidies are still due to his royal highness. I have never been informed of these details, though it would have been well that I had known them from the beginning, but at present it is of the highest importance, therefore I beg you, my lord, to inform me. I am," &c.

The affair being thus far matured, the next object was, to regulate the terms of the armistice, till the decision of the allies could be known; and to settle the time and mode in which the duke of Savoy should concur with the french, in extorting their acquiescence, and compelling them to withdraw the foreign troops from Italy. These points were rapidly adjusted in the correspondence of Catinat and St. Thomas, between the sixth and fourteenth of July. The letters, like the preceding, were communicated with affected frankness, by the duke of Savoy to the chiefs of the allied powers.

In the first letter, dated July 6th, Catinat applauds the readiness of the duke to accept the favours of his master, professes his inclination to facilitate the communications with the courts of Vienna and Madrid, accedes to the proposal of an armistice, making the Po the line of division between the two armies, on condition that it should extend to the imperial and spanish troops, and as a pledge for its observance, requires a mutual exchange of hostages. He demands, also, that this suspension should comprise the insurgent Vaudois. These conditions were communicated to the commanders of the allied powers, who professed their readiness to obey the orders of the duke of Savoy, in observing the truce, but refused to concur in the exchange of hostages.†

Accordingly, on the 9th of July the duke announced his acquiescence in the proposals of Catinat, through his minister, St. Thomas; requested that the armistice should be extended to the term of 50 days, and in consequence of the refusal of the allies,

* Minister of the duke of Savoy in England.

† Letter from prince Eugene to the duke of Savoy, dated July 9.

offered as hostages two of his own colonels. In reply, Catinat accepted the exchange of hostages, and tendered, in return, the count de Tessé and the marquis de Pouroli. "I have," he observes, "voluntarily selected the count de Tessé, because, while we wait for the answers from Vienna and Madrid, you may begin with him to form the project of a treaty." He, however, confined the term of the proposed truce to thirty days from the exchange of hostages.

Four days afterwards, Catinat announced the receipt of a new communication from his court. In the name of the king of France, he recapitulated the conditions, which had been already offered and accepted; and required, in case the House of Austria should not concur in the terms of the proposed neutrality, that the duke of Savoy should join in attacking the state of Milan, either to enforce its acceptance, or to obtain a general peace. He concluded with refusing to extend the armistice beyond a month, observing, that, if necessary, it might be prolonged at the desire of the duke. No answer arriving from the allies, to the proposed terms of neutrality, the duke, in the beginning of August, renewed his application for an extension of the armistice; and after some objections, Catinat affected, from personal respect, to risk a departure from his orders, by prolonging the truce to the end of August, on the condition that he should be permitted to pass the Po, and even the Douro, in search of forage and provisions, but, in reality, to be at hand to support the forces of Savoy, when it became necessary to separate from the allies.

These proceedings are briefly recapitulated in the letters of lord Galway, who seems no less disconcerted than surprised at his own want of foresight.

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Camp of Montcallier, July* 21-31, 1696.—Since I had the honour to write last, great changes have taken place in this country. The truce still continues, and it seems probable that his royal highness may prolong it to the end of August. This prince seems to desire ardently that the allies should consent to a peace

or neutrality for all Italy; of which he would willingly be a guarantee with the other princes.

"We are to quit this post the third of next month, and retire behind the Stura, which is two miles beyond Turin, towards the Milanese. At the same time his royal highness has conveyed an insinuation to the french to withdraw farther from Turin, behind the Pelice, which is ten miles distant from that capital; where he has announced his intention to wait till he has received the answer of the allies. He, however, gives us to understand, that a refusal to enter into a neutrality will not prevent him from going farther, being resolved to risk every thing rather than refuse Pignerol rased. * * *

"Your letters of the 30th June or 10th July are just arrived, by which it appears that you have received the copies of those from M. de Catinat and the marquis of St. Thomas. It is true that the king ought to have been named in them, and such was the opinion of the marquis of Leganes, prince Eugene, and myself; but his royal highness and the marquis de St. Thomas represented to us that the mere name of his majesty would have been sufficient to apprise the enemy, that this negotiation was undertaken only to amuse them, and that it was certain the king would never enter into it. So that if we wished to attain our object, we must consent that his majesty, without being named, should be comprised with the rest, in what was done for the emperor and the king of Spain, who are particularly interested in all the affairs of Italy, which is a part of the empire, and of which the greater portion belongs to his catholic majesty; especially the state of Milan, which, from proximity, is most concerned; and the Montferrat, to which the queen of Poland, the sister of the emperor, is heiress.* Thus, my lord, I thought it for the service of the king not to insist on this matter, which in fact is of little importance."

* Eleonora Maria, daughter of the emperor Ferdinand the third, and widow of Michael Viesnovitzky, king of Poland. In December, 1697, she espoused Charles Leopold, duke of Loraine; and from her the emperor Francis the first was descended.

"Moreover, my lord, I have long had reason to suspect the design of his royal highness, and you will perceive from all the letters of M. de Catinat and the marquis de St. Thomas, that they were not written without concert; but you will judge, at the same time, of the protestations to the contrary, by the copy I send you of the last letter which this prince wrote to the king, before he declared that he was determined to accept the proposals of France. Only two days intervened; for the letter was written the 17th, and the proposals made the 19th of June.

"I will do myself the honour, my lord, to give you an account of the progress of this business; and beg you to continue your protection."

Alarmed by these proofs of defection, the allies made an effort to retain the duke of Savoy in their interest. Conceiving that his chief temptation had been the prospect of so high an alliance for his daughter, the emperor deputed the count of Mansfeld to lure him with advantageous offers, among which the most prominent was, the marriage of Joseph, king of the Romans, with the princess of Piedmont. The attempt, however, seems to have produced no other effect than a specious declaration from the duke, that he would endeavour to confine the neutrality to his own territories. But this affected compromise was immediately and peremptorily rejected by Tessé, who declared that the views of his master would not be fulfilled without the general neutrality of Italy; and he disclaimed any hostile design against the Milanese beyond the attainment of that object.*

The effects of this negotiation will be more fully developed in the correspondence.

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Aug.* 3-13, 1696.—Count Mansfeld, the emperor's envoy, reached Turin two days ago; but I know not whether he will be able to obtain from his royal highness the time necessary for ne-

* Letter from Tessé to St. Thomas, Aug. 18, 1696.

gotiating an affair of such importance. I am, however, well assured, or at least I strongly believe, that he will not bring him to back our interests. Indeed I am alarmed at all negotiations; for it is to be feared that the House of Austria will accept the neutrality, although it may lead to the loss of Milan. This would be the greatest evil that could happen, after the separate peace of the duke of Savoy with the french. It is for the service of the king and the grand alliance that the war in Italy should be continued, but this will require money. I have at this moment twelve or thirteen battalions, amounting to 8,000 men, without any means of paying them. I borrow from all parts for the purpose; but my credit will soon fail, and I must suffer the troops to disband, who will then join the enemy, unless the king sends me supplies to support them. I beg you, my lord, to see what can be done in England. The money due to his royal highness for the rest of the subsidy should be employed for this purpose, but it must be sent hither. I impatiently expect the remittances.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD GALWAY.

[Thinks it unreasonable that any subsidies should be granted to the duke of Savoy, which ought to be appropriated for the payment of the king's troops.]

"*Whitehall, July* 28-*Aug.* 7, 1696.—My lord; Since the receipt of your lordship's of the 7th, I have endeavoured to inform myself from the lords of the Treasury, whether there be any thing due to the duke of Savoy from hence, and in what posture that is; and am told sir Joseph Hern has tallies in his hand, which he has given a note to deliver to the president de la Tour's order, to the value of ninety-two thousand pounds, out of which he has given M. de la Tour a power to draw bills immediately for 25,000*l*. If the matter in Savoy be as bad as we have cause to expect, I think it is very unreasonable this should be thus disposed of, but rather for the support of the king's troops with you, who may be serviceable in any other place."

New offers were made through the count Mansfeld, but the

attempt only drew from the duke a more explicit declaration of his intentions. Convinced that he had now effected his purpose, he assumed a language as dictatorial as his new ally. Lord Galway thus communicates the unwelcome intelligence to the noble secretary.

"*Camp of Civasso, Aug.* 6-16, 1696.—Since I wrote last, count Mansfeld came hither with new proposals from the emperor to his royal highness; but he found him too deeply engaged to be shaken in his resolutions; for he declared that at any price he must have Pignerol, and would treat only with those who could put it immediately into his possession. He asked him "Will the allies, without delay, restore me that important place, for which I will admit no equivalent?" adding, "since you know they cannot, I am determined to accept the proposals of France, who can restore it, by the treaty I shall conclude with that crown, the conditions of which are, that the allies shall accept a neutrality for Italy, and withdraw their troops." M. de Mansfeld represented that his orders from the emperor were, to do nothing without the consent of all the allies, who were too distant to arrange an affair of such importance in so limited a time. His royal highness, apparently impressed by these just reasons, at once offered to procure from M. de Catinat a prolongation of the truce to the end of September, which the marshal refused. We were apprised of the course of this negotiation before the arrival of count Mansfeld. The question is reduced to the acceptance of the neutrality before the 20th of September, or a renewal of the war. The first alternative is injurious to the common cause, the second dangerous for the Milanese, where the magazines and other preparations for the prosecution of the war are in a bad state; and the army, which ought to defend the country, is weaker by 15,000 men than that by which it will be attacked."

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Camp at Saluzze, Aug.* 17-27, 1696.—My lord; Since my last, M. Mansfeld, after several conferences with the marquis de

St. Thomas, has formed or admitted several projects, which I send you.* I think them very futile. Probably not one will succeed. They wish for a neutrality, and mask it, that they may induce us to accept it. Yet the french and his royal highness, who have their designs, and do not suffer themselves to be amused, are embarking their artillery, and making all their preparations for a great enterprise. The french will march as early as the first of September. His royal highness is not to join his troops until the 15th, because their dispositions will not be earlier made; and unless the House of Austria, in spite of the allies, accepts a ruinous and shameful neutrality, we shall have a war in the Milanese, very difficult for us to maintain, if we be not powerfully supported, and promptly succoured. To-morrow we march with our infantry towards Casale; our cavalry will remain there as long as possible. The troops of his royal highness being joined to those of the enemy, they will have in the field more than thirty thousand infantry, and at least twelve thousand horse. We have not at present more than eighteen thousand infantry, and seven thousand cavalry, with which to garrison five wretched places, of considerable extent, very ill provided. I know not what course M. de Leganes will take. If I judge rightly, we shall place all our infantry in the fortresses, and shall use our cavalry to incommode the enemy in their convoys and foraging parties. The season being far advanced, they will not perhaps succeed in their enterprises.

"I am here without money. M. de la Tour has tallies for very considerable sums, and the duke of Savoy defers paying me, under the pretence that the king is indebted to him, to the amount of all that his royal highness owes his majesty's troops, those of Brandenburgh, and some others, in which I have refused to acquiesce, on the authority of your letter of July 28. I shall have to make great advances for the troops in the king's pay. If I had not charged myself with their pay-

* These projects comprised various arrangements for a particular neutrality, on the part of Savoy only, but they were all rejected by France.

ment, the neutrality could not have been rejected by the allies; and it is even now not so absolutely rejected, but that there is too much reason to fear it will at last be accepted.

"His royal highness declared to me two days ago, that he would sign his treaty. I deemed it my duty to tell him, that since he was resolved to do it, I thought a minister of the king could no longer remain with him, unless his majesty sent me other orders, which I should wait for at the army; and I took my leave of him. I am sending to Milan the effects and equipage which I had at Turin."

In conformity with his declarations, and without waiting for any farther proposals from the allies, the duke of Savoy entered into a formal treaty with France, which, on the 29th of August, was signed at Turin, by the marquis de St. Thomas and count Tessé. In return for the renunciation of his connection with the allies, and an engagement to concur in obtaining a neutrality for Italy, he was rewarded with the cession of Pignerol, St. Bridget, and Perugia rased, and the restoration of all conquests and dismemberments since the time of Louis XIII. A marriage was arranged between his daughter, Mary Adelaide, and the duke of Burgundy. His embassadors at the court of Versailles were also to receive royal honours, and he was himself invested with the supreme command of the french and Piedmontese troops in Italy.

The treaty was not to be publicly acknowledged till the end of September, that the duke might announce his secession to the allies; but he immediately proceeded to act in conformity with his new engagements. The confederate troops continued their retreat into the Milanese, the french passed the Po on the 3rd of September, and advanced to Casale; and the 16th, the day on which the contract of marriage between the duke of Burgundy and the princess was signed, a junction took place between the armies of France and Savoy. The duke assumed the command, and, at the head of nearly 50,000 men, entered the Milanese, to besiege Valenza. The effects of this fatal change form the subject of the ensuing correspondence.

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Camp of St. Mazaro, Sept.* 5-15, 1696.—My lord; Since I had the honour to write to you, we have retired hither by short marches daily, to avoid the enemy, and not expose ourselves to an engagement. Being in the state of Milan, we have visited the places which form a frontier of nearly sixty miles. We have found them in bad condition, and ill-provided; and having an army destitute of cannon, and almost of mortars, and inferior to the enemy, all we could do was, to station our infantry in those places, and be ready with our cavalry to molest them in their enterprises. They are still near Casale. To-morrow his royal highness will be at Vercelli. The time granted for all the truces is expired. M. de Leganes pretends that the emperor consents to the particular neutrality of the states of his royal highness. M. de Mansfeld declares he has no orders, except for an armistice. The french are disposed neither for a neutrality nor an armistice, but on condition that the troops of the allies quit Italy. I know not how these different interests will be reconciled.

"I have described to you the manner in which I withdrew from the duke of Savoy, after the declaration he made to me that he would sign his treaty with France at the end of August, and denounce war against the allies on the 17th of September, if the neutrality were not accepted. It seemed to me that his majesty could no longer have a minister in the court of that prince, after a treaty signed with the enemy, and a resolution taken to declare war against the allies, unless they accepted a neutrality, to which his majesty is adverse. Since I have quitted his states, his royal highness has sent me a present, which, not thinking proper to accept, I refused, with much submission, desiring the master of the ceremonies to keep it until he should know whether the king would permit me to receive it. As soon as I am apprised what course the french take, I shall dispatch a courier to the king, and by the same opportunity let you know all that passes.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD GALWAY.

[A supply of money will be forwarded.]

"*Whitehall, Sept.* 15-25, 1696.—My lord; Sir Joseph Hern having this evening acquainted Mr. Vernon, that he will dispatch, by this post, credit for ten thousand pounds, I only send this to accompany the good news, and to assure you all possible diligence shall be used, that more may follow in time. I wish it were in our power here to do any thing more for your service."

Thus betrayed by their ally, and menaced with a superior force, the confederates availed themselves of the interval employed in the siege of Valenza, to accede to the proffered neutrality, by a convention, which was signed at Vigevano, on the 7th of October, by the plenipotentiaries of France, Savoy, Spain, and Austria.

The articles were: A neutrality in Italy, and a suspension of arms, till the conclusion of a general peace. The spanish forces were to take up their quarters in the Milanese; and the french, as well as the imperialists, and foreign auxiliaries, were respectively to withdraw from Italy. As an indemnification for the winter quarters, which the Italian princes had engaged to furnish to the imperialists, the emperor was to receive 300,000 pistoles, one-third before his troops began their march, and the remainder at a time prefixed, with sufficient security for the payment.

King William was deeply mortified by the base, as well as contemptuous, treatment which he experienced from his former ally; for his name was purposely omitted in all the diplomatic correspondence relating to this transaction, and he was not distinguished by a written apology for the desertion of the duke of Savoy, which had been made even to the elector of Brandenburgh and the duke of Bavaria. A prince of such lofty sentiments could not fail to feel the warmest indignation at this unworthy treatment; he, therefore, received the communication from the count de la Tour, the minister of Savoy, with silent contempt; and

directed lord Galway to remonstrate with the duke in such terms as his ingratitude and duplicity deserved.

In reviewing the progress of this clandestine negotiation, we cannot but be surprised at the blindness of lord Galway, and the overweening confidence of the imperial and british courts, who appear to have paid little attention to the machinations of the duke of Savoy, though the marquis de Leganes, as early as May, apprised his own sovereign, as well as the emperor, the king of England, and the states, that the duke was in treaty with France, and demanded aids of men and money; with the presence of a british squadron in the Mediterranean, as the only means of keeping that prince true to his engagements, or defending the Milanese against him in case of his defection.*

The subsequent measures are briefly recapitulated in the letters from lord Galway, which will supersede the necessity of any farther detail.†

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Camp near Pavia, Sept.* 18-28, 1696.—My lord; Since I had the honour of writing to you, the conferences have been continued between M. de Mansfeld, M. de Leganes, and the marquis de St. Thomas, but without leading to any conclusion. The last returned yesterday to the enemy's camp. He is to send a courier to acquaint us whether his royal highness will quit the siege of Valenza and go to Turin, and the french withdraw from the Milanese. If any thing induces them to take this resolution, it will be the rain; and if that happens, M. de Mansfeld will again repair to Turin to resume the negotiations.

"However, his royal highness, at the head of the french army,

* Justificatory apology of the marquis de Leganes, mentioned in Ralph's History of England, vol. 1, p. 671.

† We have elucidated the history of these events by consulting Diplomacie Française—Koch, Histoire des Traités de Paix—Barré Histoire d'Allemagne—Muratori, Annali d'Italia—Ralph's History of England, vol. 1.—Tindal, vol. 14; and Lamberti.

opened the trenches the night between the 24th and 25th. Their cannon began to fire this morning. The rains also commenced to-night. If they continue, they will much distress the besiegers. M. de Leganes and prince Eugene departed from hence this morning with the cavalry, and left me to cover Pavia. If we can undertake any thing, I will join them with six battalions, which I have here, and the artillery. They have left also their heavy baggage.

"With regard to the peace of Italy, or a suspension of arms till a general accommodation, we are still in the same state. The french will not withdraw from Italy, except at the same time as the forces of the allies. His royal highness would not otherwise deem himself safe; but he does not chuse to be charged with the maintenance of their troops, and would willingly throw it on the Milanese, to which M. Leganes will not, and, indeed, cannot consent. The imperialists cannot depart till they have received the 300,000 pistoles, and the princes of Italy cannot pay them. You may judge, my lord, that so many different interests cannot be speedily reconciled. So that if it is for the service of the king to continue the war in Italy, it may be done, provided we are assisted. We shall lose a few places; but, if by the help of bad weather, we can prevent the enemy from taking winter quarters in the Milanese, and if they are obliged to repass the mountains, I think we shall make war very advantageously next year, if there is any occasion to do it, for we hear of nothing but a general peace. I am," &c.

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The german army commence their march for the evacuation of Italy—Lord Galway, also, preparing to retire.]

"*Milan, Oct.* 17-27, 1696.—My lord; I send you the copy of an article annexed to the treaty of Vigevano, which appears better than the rest. The imperialists received, on the 25th of this month, thirty-five thousand pistoles: it is affirmed that they are still to receive fifty-eight thousand more, and they content themselves with the obligations of the princes of Italy, and the

pledge of his royal highness and M. de Leganes for 207,000 still deficient. The emperor's troops begin to march to-morrow, the 28th, and will be all out of Italy before the 20th November. The spaniards behold us here with pain. If we remain longer, it will cost the king more to no purpose. There will be more trouble in withdrawing the troops in bad weather, and they will arrive later in the Netherlands, and will with greater difficulty be prepared for service next year. I shall do all I can to march from hence, and quit this country myself as soon as possible. I beg, my lord, you will continue to assist me with your protection, that money may be remitted to me, to enable me to act for the king's service. No one is with more respect," &c.

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Signature of a treaty of neutrality—Arrangements for the evacuation of Italy.]

"*Milan, Oct.* 19-29, 1696.—My lord; I did myself the honour to give you an account of the treaty which has been signed. The siege of Valenza has in consequence been raised. The enemy have repassed the Po, and are at present on the banks of the Sesia, at Candia. Much difficulty occurs in the execution of this treaty. The princes of Italy are neither able nor willing to pay. The great duke and the republic of Genoa are among the last: The duke of Mantua, for the Mantuan and Montferrat, with many other petty princes, among the first. The dukes of Modena and Parma offer their quota for the first 100,000 pistoles, but that amounts only to 27,000. However, the french require forage, for which the state of Milan is unable to pay. It is said that the maintenance of the allies and the french costs this state 3,000 pistoles daily. If the rain continues as it began three days ago, our army will be obliged to retire quickly, or be ruined." * * *

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Farther preparations for a retreat, and separation of the armies.]

"*Turin*,* *Oct.* 31-*Nov.* 10, 1696.—My lord; I no longer do myself the honour of writing to you so regularly, because nothing occurs here, which is worthy of communication. All that now remains to be done, is to withdraw the troops from Italy. Those of France have already quitted the Milanese; and I do not think the duke of Savoy will keep them long in Piedmont. M. de Leganes and prince Eugene are still at Turin. The ratification of the treaty of Vigevano by the emperor is most probably arrived there."

The defection of the duke of Savoy was attended with the natural consequence of creating jealousy among the allies. We find lord Galway, whose suspicions were awakened by the deception of which he had been the dupe, suddenly conveying intimations that the emperor, or at least his minister, count Mansfeld, was secretly disposed to follow the example of the duke.

LORD GALWAY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Milan*, *Nov.* 7-17, 1696.—My lord; I am much concerned at the continuation of your disorder, and cordially wish you a speedy and effectual recovery, for your own sake and that of the public.

"The french are not sorry to circulate the rumour of a separate treaty, projected and negotiated at Turin, to cause disunion among the allies, and console their own people. However, this report was not entirely without foundation. I am persuaded that M. de Mansfeld used all his endeavours to draw the negotiation of a general peace to Turin. This minister has been here two days, and is going to Vienna. He inserted an

* Mis-dated by mistake for Milan.

article in the treaty of Vigevano, which tended to refer to the duke of Savoy the negotiation of a general peace. The emperor ratified the treaty, with the exception of this article; and rejected the other, in which this article remained, and which was sent to Vienna without my knowledge. The king of Spain sent two ratifications, with an order to M. de Leganes to give me the ratification which was conformable to that of the emperor. While M. de Mansfeld remains in this country, we ought not to be without some suspicion, more however from his own views, than from the design of the emperor. This minister would be pleased to be charged with the negotiation for a general peace; and I think nothing but this has influenced his conduct; for I have always heard the emperor praised for his good faith. Those who know him do not think him capable of perfidy.

"I thank you, my lord, for the continuance of your protection. I have at present money enough; I only beg that the merchants who have intrusted their property to me may not be ruined."

With this letter we close the correspondence of the british commander, from Italy; for soon afterwards he marched with the remnant of his forces, to join the army in the Netherlands. About the same time the imperialists retired beyond the Alps, leaving the spaniards in the Milanese, and the duke of Savoy to exult in his duplicity.

The consequences of this neutrality were soon and deeply felt. The retreat of the allies from Italy relieved the enemy from the charge of defending their south-eastern frontier; and liberated an army of 50,000 men, to swell the french ranks in Flanders, and accelerate the conquest of Catalonia.

Louis the Fourteenth exulted in his profound and successful policy. He announced his gratification, by causing a medal to be struck, allegorically figuring the conclusion and consequence of the treaty. On one side was Minerva, bearing a javelin in one hand, and an olive branch in the other, with the Ægis at her feet. Near was Hymen, sitting with a lighted

torch, and leaning on a shield, bearing the united arms of France and Savoy. The motto was "Minerva Pacifica," and the exergue bore the inscription "Pax Sabaudiæ, 1696."*

* Diplomacie Française, t. 4, p. 135, *note*.—Koch, Histoire des Traités.—Barré, Histoire d'Allemagne.—Kennett's History of England.—Ralph, vol. 1.—Tindal, vol. 14.—Memoirs of the Secret Transactions in Savoy during the War.—Memoires de Tessé.

CHAPTER 7.

NEGOTIATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO THE PEACE OF RYSWICK:

1696—1697.

Commencement of the negotiations for peace—Pretensions of the respective parties—Preliminary discussions and arrangements—The mediation of Sweden accepted—Appointment of Plenipotentiaries—Assembly of the congress at Ryswick—Obstructions arising from the hesitation of the french to acknowledge king William, and to abandon the cause of James—Correspondence with lord Villiers and sir Joseph Williamson, from August, 1696, to July, 1697.

FEW portions of english history have furnished more scope for conjecture and controversy, than the mysterious negotiations which terminated in the peace of Ryswick. To this transaction we have already adverted, in our remarks on the correspondence with the king;* and the caution with which the subject is treated by his majesty, will suffice to shew the mystery observed, both towards his cabinet ministers and the public. The correspondence with Lord Villiers, sir Joseph Williamson, and the earl of Portland, who were employed in different periods of the negotiation, will not only serve to develope its commencement and progress, but will still farther manifest the principle of exclusion adopted in the preliminary stage of the transaction, as well towards the english negotiators, as towards the secretary of state.

From these and other sources, it appears that the first overture was made by Louis the Fourteenth, who took advantage of the jealousy and alarm excited by the defection of the duke of Savoy, and employed the agency of his minister D'Avaux, for the purpose of engaging Charles the Eleventh, king of Sweden, to offer his mediation between France and the allies. This apparent inclina-

* Part 1, ch. 6.

tion was readily encouraged by William, who felt the inability of England to continue the contest; and in the autumn of 1696 the count de Callieres, a confidential secretary in the department of foreign affairs, was deputed by Louis to Holland, to open a direct communication. In the absence of William at the army, and in England, the negotiation was principally conducted by lord Villiers, who appeared at the Hague, in August, the same year, in the character of envoy from England, and by Dykvelt, one of the ministers of the states.

"Many of the preliminary points appear to have been arranged in the course of the Winter and Spring, though considerable difficulties still arose, from the endeavours of the emperor, the empire, and Spain, to recover those rights and territories, which had been recently usurped by France. The chief of these usurpations were comprised under the title of re-unions, a plea which Louis had advanced for the purpose of appropriating every member and dependency of those towns and provinces, which he had acquired by the treaties of Westphalia and the Pyrenees. For this purpose, tribunals, or chambers* of re-union, had been established, and every town or territory, which, from antiquated records, or traditional evidence, appeared to be connected, however remotely, with the ceded countries, was claimed as a dependency, and required to acknowledge the sovereignty of France. Many of these dismemberments had been consolidated by the peace of Nimeguen; but such acquisitions appeared only to excite new cupidity; and, after the conclusion of that peace, the plan of re-union was resumed with increasing activity.†

The recovery of these rights and territories was, however, a darling object with the emperor, the german princes, and Spain; and, though obliged to yield to the necessities of their situation, they did not neglect this opportunity of reviving and enforcing their demands.

---

* Three chambers of re-union were established at Brisac, for Alsace; at Metz, for the three bishoprics of Metz, Toul, and Verdun; and at Besançon, for Franche Comté.

† For a more detailed account of the various usurpations of Louis XIV, see the History of the House of Austria, from chap. 63 to 67.

At length these jarring claims were reduced into shape, and the mediation of Sweden was formally solicited by the belligerent powers. To avoid the direct acknowledgment of William, as king of England, a series of preliminaries was dictated to Lillienroot, the minister of Sweden, by Callieres, in behalf of the king of France, on the 10th of February, 1697. The greater part of the articles related to the restoration of Strasbourg and Luxembourg, and other places wrested from Spain and the empire, by the system of re-union; and with regard to England, a specific clause was introduced, promising to recognise the title of the king at the conclusion of peace.

After many discussions and objections on the place of meeting, Ryswick, a palace belonging to the prince of Orange, near Delft, was selected for the assembly of the intended congress, and its proceedings were opened in the month of May, 1697. On the part of England the earl of Pembroke and sir Joseph Williamson were associated with lord Villiers. On that of France, messieurs Harlai and Creci were joined to Callieres. On the side of Holland appeared Boreel, Heinsius, and Dykvelt; while the emperor deputed the counts of Kaunitz and Straatman, and the baron de Seilern; and Spain Don Joseph de Quiros, and the count de Tirlemond. The jarring pretensions of France, the emperor, the empire, and Spain, gave rise to innumerable discussions and difficulties, of which the correspondence will supersede the necessity of a detail.

Although the attention of all parties was apparently fixed on the negotiation, they did not the less actively pursue their warlike operations. In this respect, however, the french regained the ascendancy which they had lost in the campaign of 1695; for while William was shackled by the disorder in the british finances, they made the most vigorous efforts in the principal theatres of the war. As we have already observed, to vanquish the repugnance of Spain, they sent a powerful army into Catalonia, and fitted out an expedition under admiral Pointis, against the spanish colonies in South America. At the same time they accumulated a superior force in the Netherlands, under the com-

mand of Boufflers; and William had the mortification to be reduced to the defensive, and to witness the capture of Ath, which surrendered in the beginning of May, 1697, after a siege of only a few days. Thus circumstanced, he had no other resource than to occupy a position, for the purpose of covering Brussels, which was next menaced; and in this he fully succeeded. Collaterally with these operations the french profited by the vacancy which had occurred in the throne of Poland, on the death of John Sobieski, to bring forward the prince of Conti as a candidate, in opposition to Augustus, elector of Saxony, whose cause was espoused by the emperor and the allies. These projects and events materially influenced the progress of the negotiation. Among other cavils, the acknowledgment of William's title, which had been apparently conceded, was again brought into discussion, under another shape; and the demand of a liberal allowance for king James was advanced by the french king, under the plea of requiring the payment of his queen's jointure. There was the strongest reason also to fear, that the king of France was only amusing the allies with a feigned negotiation, while he prosecuted his advantages, and that he would seize the first favourable opportunity of breaking off the treaty.

The details of this part of the negotiation are amply given in the correspondence.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Is anxious for information concerning the peace.]

"*Whitehall, July* 28, 1696.—Every body is in great expectation of the event of a treaty for a general peace, much talked of here. As any thing comes to your lordship's knowledge, that may be properly communicated, I confess myself very curious, and it will be a great obligation to," &c.

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The defection of Savoy has not broken off the negotiation—The stay of Callieres at Rotterdam still gives hopes of a peace—The conditions uncertain.]

"*Hague, Aug.* 10, N. S. 1696.— * * * Your grace sees that the peace of Savoy has not broke off the treaty, though it may have lessened the advantages of it. Callieres is at Rotterdam, and as long as he stays in these parts there is reason to hope a peace may be effected. *Did I know any certainty of the conditions,* it should have been no secret to your grace. I have heard, in general, that the great difficulty is about Strasbourg: some say the french will not give it up, others say they will, but demolished; either one or the other is not of consequence enough to England, to hinder our accepting of a peace, rather than prolonging a war, which, I fear, in a little time, we must sink under so far, as not ever to be able to hold up our heads against our neighbours."

REPLY OF THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Thanks him for his information.]

"*Whitehall, Aug.* 7-17, 1696.—My lord; Your's of the 10th, N. S., requiring no answer, I shall only give you thanks for it; and for the pains you give yourself to inform one, *who is more ignorant than you can believe.* The continuance of the same favour, and your friendship, will always be very much esteemed by," &c.

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Want of money has compelled the king to accept the overture of France—Meetings between Dykvelt and Callieres.]

"*Gamaries, Aug.* 25, N. S. 1696.—My lord; The manner in which your grace has laid your commands upon me is so obliging, that I shall always esteem it a happiness to have it in my power to obey them: the little turn I have made to the army (where I had the honour of your grace's of the 7th) will something contribute to it. I am assured that the difficulties of our money has made

his majesty resolve to accept of the peace; but I find whatever clamour the allies make against it, that England must answer for it, whose necessities have occasioned it. I hear that monsieur Dykvelt, since his return to the Hague, has had several conferences with monsieur Callieres, and is to meet the king at Breda; but I suppose there are no more difficulties very material, for I am told that Spain, by reason of its distance, has already notice to prepare embassadors to treat. My lord, though I do not write what you should not know, your grace will not think fit that any body else should know that I do it; I can assure you that I have never writ so particularly to any body living. I hope your grace will excuse this caution, since I am, with a very sincere respect," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Will be cautious not to divulge his information.]

"*Whitehall, Aug. 25-Sept. 4*, 1696.—My lord; I esteem the favour of your confidence so much, that I shall not fail to take all the care possible on my part, that it may never turn to your prejudice.

"If the allies clamour that our necessities force the peace, and would make us answerable for the consequences, if the conclusion be not good; the difficulties here do so demonstrably proceed from our zeal to support them, beyond our abilities, that if they do not take that for a good excuse, they are unreasonable, and we must another time manage our stock with more caution."

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The king of France has declared his willingness to enter into a treaty on the basis of those of Munster, or Westphalia and Nimeguen.]

"*Hague, Aug. 31*, N. S., 1696.—My lord; I can now with more certainty write to your grace concerning the peace. The Pensioner, by the king's command, has imparted to me the steps which have been made in it; but with all imaginable caution of secrecy. The conditions are chiefly founded upon the treaties of Munster and Nimeguen; as to what regards Strasbourg in parti-

cular, the only difference is, whether the empire shall be allowed to re-fortify it after it is in their hands. I think there is no dispute as to what regards England, and I hope we shall not lose a peace, in our necessity, for a german trifle. Though the business is not yet owned, I think it so far advanced, that I may take the liberty to speak a word to your grace, in favour of Mr. Prior.* He is here in quality of the king's secretary, and I think he will have a great deal of injustice done him, if he is not secretary to the embassy. Your grace is to judge of his capacity by the business that has gone through his hands; and I hope when you think it a fit time to speak to the king about the peace, you will be pleased to recommend him to his majesty. I am," &c.

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the same subject.]

"*Hague, Sept.* 4, N. S. 1696.—My lord; What I have lately entertained your grace with, is now *no longer* so great a secret: the Pensioner yesterday morning acquainted the ministers at the congress, that the king of France was willing to enter into a treaty of peace upon the foot of those of Westphalia and Nimeguen, and desired them to write to their masters concerning it, in order to have their answer as soon as possible. I presume this first public step would not have been made, if the conclusion were not already pretty well assured. The place most likely for the treaty is either Maestrich or Breda, the french having refused to let it be in any town belonging to the emperor or Spain."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Expresses his satisfaction on the probability of peace—Hopes that the articles relative to England will be adjusted before the conclusion of a general treaty.]

"*Whitehall, Sept.* 1-11, 1696.—My lord; Your letters of the 31st August and 4th Sept., N. S., came together, and, in my opinion, bring good news. I hope care will be taken that every thing relating to us may be well adjusted and declared, that there may be

* Matthew Prior, the celebrated poet.

no possibility, after the public treaty is begun, of breaking it off, and deferring the peace, upon any dispute of the king's title, or other articles that might be proper for us to insist upon.

"I shall write by this post concerning Mr. Prior, in the manner your lordship desires; and do it very willingly, because you recommend it, and at the same time I think his pretension very just, and himself very well qualified for the place."

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The pacification suspended by the demands of the emperor—No dispute likely to arise on the acknowledgment of the king's title.]

"*Hague, Sept.* 18, N. S. 1696.—My lord; I did not answer your grace's of the 1st, last post, in expectation of having, by this time, something more to tell you relating to the peace; but the emperor's answer to the first overture is not yet come, and I fear when it does, there will be occasion of a farther delay; for I am told that he will insist upon having the place of treaty in the empire, which the french will never consent to. Such punctilios are not worth the delay of a quarter of an hour, in an affair of this consequence, but I believe there will be trouble enough before they are adjusted. The pensioner told me yesterday, that he thought it was time to have instructions prepared, for those that were to act on the king's side in the treaty. I was glad of the opportunity, and have writ both to sir William Trumbull and Mr. Blathwayt about it; by their answers I shall be able to tell your grace what care will be taken of England. I understand by monsieur Dykvelt, that there will be no dispute of the king's title, but he will not own to have entered upon any other particular that relates to it. My lord, Mr. Prior will thank you in better style than I can, for your goodness to him, and I shall always think myself extremely obliged to your grace for it."

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Exorbitant demands of the emperor—Hopes the king will obviate the ill effects of his opposition.]

"*Hague, Sept.* 25, N. S. 1696.—My lord; The emperor's answer is at last come, with the same difficulties, and more than

I foretold in my last to your grace. He directly nominates Aix-la-Chapelle as the place of treaty; he demands the entire restitution of Loraine, and appeals to the Recess of Nuremberg for the giving back the ten imperial towns, which the french claim, by the treaty of Westphalia. This he asks as a foundation for a peace, and would oblige the king of Sweden for a guarantee of it, so far as to make him furnish his 6,000 men to carry on the war, in case he cannot bring France to these conditions. I doubt if, upon these terms, we shall either have mediator or peace; and I find that it is much desired by those who manage this business here, that the king should come quietly hither, to prevent, by some vigorous resolution, the delays which must necessarily occur, by these proceedings of the emperor, and which may cause us the expense of another campaign. I cannot tell how far the king will enter into this project against an ally.

"I came this morning from Loo. I find they think it there not safe to make any step in this affair but by the joint consent of the emperor; and (what I like worse) that England wants nothing but a good will to carry on the war. But this is what I shall never trust with any man living but your grace, who, I am sure, will make no other use of it, but for the advantage of the nation. I find the king intends to refer the instructions for his plenipotentiaries to his cabinet council, *which, I believe, will hardly be done before his coming into England.* I have reason to think that the king designs me the honour of being one of his plenipotentiaries, but has not declared it enough for me to own it. In whatever circumstances his majesty may place me, I shall always continue, with great respect," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Regrets the obstacles to peace.]

"*Whitehall, Sept. 22-Oct. 2, 1696.*—My lord; Three posts have arrived together, and brought me two letters from your lordship, one of the 8th, and the other the 15th,* of this month.

* 25th N. S.

You know my opinion so well, that you will believe I am not well pleased at the difficulties that arise upon the peace; but when all is done, if it must not, or cannot be, we must make war as well as we can; and though we are not so rich, nor so able as some may think or represent us, yet I hope we shall be found in a better state and inclination to proceed, than is imagined at Paris.

"I think there can be very little doubt but that whilst your lordship continues in the station you are, it is impossible but you must be one of the plenipotentiaries; who the others will be, I have not known nor inquired."

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Alarm among the allies at the rumour that the king of Spain had declared the second son of the dauphin his successor—Hopes that England will not neglect its own interests.]

"*Hague, Oct.* 9, N. S. 1696.—My lord; I did not design to trouble your grace with my acknowledgment of your's of the 22nd past, till the return of the courier from Vienna, but that I have heard some news from Madrid unexpected and considerable enough. The king of Spain, in his late illness, is said to have declared, by will, the second son of the dauphin his heir and successor, and left the regency, during the child's minority, in the hands of the french faction. Your grace may easily imagine that this very report alarms some of our allies already, as the confirmation of it will do most of the princes in Europe. Every body thinks what he shall gain in this general scramble; and the dutch, I am pretty confident, reckon upon their share in the West Indies. I hope we shall not be the only people that neglect our affairs in a point that concerns us so nearly, and I take the liberty to mention it to your grace, who thinks more particularly of the good of the nation than any man."

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Contradictory claims of the imperialists and french, relative to the cession of Luxembourg —Explanatory articles offered by the ministers of the allies to Callieres, preparatory to any farther negotiation.]

"*Hague, Oct.* 26, N. S. 1696.—My lord; We are still wrangling in the congress about the preliminaries; and though the imperialists are come off from some of their difficulties, there are yet enough behind to retard us: there is one of a new nature on monsieur Callieres' side, who pretends now not to have offered Luxembourg otherwise than demolished. Your grace will easily imagine that this occasioned a very great heat in our spanish minister, and I do not find but that the whole congress were of opinion, that this doubt is of too great a consequence not to be absolutely cleared, before any other step be made. Monsieur Dykvelt, therefore, was desired yesterday, by the congress, to let monsieur Callieres know that this was their opinion. There will not be much difficulty in the rest of Callieres' declaration as to the preliminaries. I will take the liberty to repeat it to your grace, because monsieur Dykvelt yesterday undertook to carry it to him, as we understand it.

"The treaties of Westphalia and Nimeguen;

"His majesty to be acknowledged;

"Strasbourg to be restored in the condition it was, when France took it;

"Luxembourg in the state it now is;

"All in general to be restored, that has been taken by the re-unions, since the peace of Nimeguen. When the place is agreed on (which the imperialists insist to have in the empire), monsieur Callieres is required to dictate to the mediator, before witnesses, the declaration as I have stated it. The imperialists think it would lessen the duke of Loraine's title to have it comprehended as a part of the peace of Nimeguen, and will not therefore consent to have it mentioned in the preliminaries."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Indisposition occasioned by a fall from his horse—Is surprised at the new pretensions advanced by Callieres.]

"*Eyford, Oct.* 24-*Nov.* 3, 1696.—My lord; I am detained here in the country, by an accident that happens more than ordinarily unfortunate to me, since it hinders my waiting on the king, and attending the parliament. Nor am I yet able to judge how long this restraint is like to continue upon me. The same indisposition has hindered my acknowledging some of your lordship's letters, they requiring no other answer than my thanks, and writing being a little uneasy to my breast.

"Monsieur Callieres' new explanation of his offer is very surprising, and I hope will not be insisted on by him; certainly those who have treated with him could not misunderstand him in so material a point. I wish all may end happily."

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Regrets his indisposition—Callieres persists in his demand relative to Luxembourg—other points likely to be adjusted.]

"*Hague, Oct.* 30, N. S. 1696.—My lord; I was very much surprised to hear from Mr. Vernon the ill accident that detains your grace in the country. I hope this will find you recovered and in town, where I am sure your presence is very necessary at this time.

"Monsieur Dykvelt has brought us monsieur Callieres' answer, that he cannot consent to the point of Luxembourg, till he has farther orders from France. He has consented to what the imperialists proposed, of not having Loraine mentioned in the preliminaries, and he likewise consents to dictate the preliminaries to the mediator, as soon as they may be adjusted. There is yet some dispute about the re-unions, but such as I imagine will not be of any great consequence. As to the place, the emperor insists publicly to have it in the empire. I hear his ministers here have private orders to consent to a town in the provinces, so that I think the treaty will begin, provided the difficulty of Luxembourg be once adjusted. The success of the whole affair will depend

upon the good resolutions of the parliament, which I hope will be an argument to them, to take such as may purchase a peace, though indeed we must pay excessively for it."

These various difficulties seem at length to have been so satisfactorily adjusted, that the french court demanded passports for their plenipotentiaries, which proposal was, however, declined by the allies, till a place was selected for the meeting of the congress. At this juncture a new and unexpected embarrassment arose, concerning the mode in which the title of king William was to be acknowledged; and we find that the difficulty occasioned an immediate suspension of the proceedings.

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Hague, Nov.* 23, 1696.—My lord; I am sorry to tell your grace that the french *chicanent* every day, more and more; and now, in the only point that concerns England, which is, the manner of their owning his majesty, they have always said that they would declare to the mediator, in the preliminaries, that they would own him in the treaty; but now, though Callieres still continues to say he will own the king in the treaty, he refuses to declare it in the preliminaries. The ministers in the congress took this as they ought, and have resolved to proceed in no other points till this be settled. I told monsieur Dykvelt, who acquaints Callieres with our proceedings, that speaking of me, he might say, that I regarded this chicane not worth the king's consideration, or any answer from me; and I hope this way of slighting it was what I ought to do. I must own to your grace that this change in their negotiator, and their preparations at Brest, make me fear some design like that of last year, which we cannot be too much aware of.

"I am very well informed from France, that though they have actually named their plenipotentiaries for the peace, there is reason to think they design nothing less, but have a particular *regard* against England.

"I have seen a letter from Geneva, of the 6th of this month,

which says, that they are informed from France, that Fenwick* had discovered several persons of quality to have been in the late conspiracy. Your grace will please to mind the date, and make your reflections how they could know at that time, what was doing in England, unless their correspondents in France knew before what Fenwick would do."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Thinks Callieres is instructed to start difficulties—Supposes sir J. Fenwick's plot to be partly instigated by France—Expects an attempt at invasion.]

"*Eyford, Nov.* 21-*Dec.* 1, 1696.—My lord; I am still kept here very unfortunately and very uneasily; I hope a little patience more will bring me to London, where I have long and earnestly desired to be.

"I suppose Callieres has directions to raise cavils, that his master may have time to see what we can or will do here: the last he may already be satisfied of; the first will take up more time to clear itself.

"I believe sir John Fenwick's plot, like all the rest we have had, is part french and part english; let it begin where it will, there is a goods hare of impudence, as well as villainy in the contrivance. I have, for some time, been of your lordship's opinion, that we ought to expect something from France before the summer. Their preparations, and the discourses of some of the most reasonable among them, convince me of it, and we have a precedent out of history for such a sort of proceeding; for in queen Elizabeth's time, in 1588, commissioners were in Flanders, negotiating a peace, on stricter amity with Spain, and at the very same time the spanish armada came into the channel, and the news of that broke up the treaty."

* This observation is worthy of particular remark; it shows the nature and origin of those accusations which were brought forward by Fenwick.

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Change in the language of Callieres—Professes the readiness of France to own the king—Thinks the negotiation will proceed slowly—Difficulties on the part of the imperialists.]

"*Hague, Dec.* 11, N. S. 1696.—My lord; I have the honour of your grace's of the 21st past from Eyford, which gives me hopes that this may find you in town. Callieres has changed his note, and acknowledges his orders from France to own the king. He is to meet with our negotiators, to agree on what terms he is to do it to the mediator, when he declares to him the other preliminary points. I look upon this difficulty as quite removed; and, though there be no other considerable one in the preliminaries, I am of opinion we shall not go very soon to a place of treaty. The king and states have a mind to conclude as much of the whole affair as they can in this private manner; for the truth of it is, our mediator is too much french to have any thing trusted in his hand, that can be done without him. Your grace may imagine that this is managed here with the greatest circumspection; for some of our ministers, as well as our mediator, have a great mind to go to a congress."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Rejoices at the news conveyed in his last letter.]

"*Eyford, Dec.* 12-22, 1696.—My lord; The good news I find in your letter of the 11th, N. S. is a comfortable cordial in this cold, melancholy cottage. May the same disposition continue till the work be perfected.

"I have flattered myself so often with the expectation of removing, that I am ashamed again to mention any thing like it; but my spitting blood is so visibly decreased of late, that I am in hopes it may now soon stop.

"It would be hard for a man that has lived quiet like me, to leave the world just when it is ready to enjoy so great a blessing; but death is a destiny we are not masters of: till that hour, I am, with great truth," &c.

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The manner of owning the king's title adjusted—Imperialists raise difficulties by insisting on Luxembourg, and the mention of Loraine in the preliminaries—They likewise demand the immediate acceptance of the mediation.]

"*Hague, Dec.* 14, N. S. 1696.—My lord; The manner about owning the king is thus adjusted. After Callieres has declared the other preliminary points to the mediator, Dykvelt and Boreel are to say that they have agreed, that at the signing of the peace the king of France shall own the prince of Orange king of England, which Callieres is to confirm at the same time, in the name of his master. Your grace will know, that this method is sent to his majesty, and that we wait his answer. In the mean time the imperialists, according to their custom, make difficulties. The most considerable are, that they insist upon Luxembourg, and now desire to have Loraine named in the preliminaries; though before, they thought it better not to have it mentioned before the treaty. They would likewise have the mediation accepted immediately, though I may tell your grace I believe they would gain very little by it, for I fear he is more pre-engaged to the french, than either the emperor imagines or we desire.

"I do not apply myself to you as a secretary of state, but I wish you would contrive that instructions may be given for what concerns our nation in the treaty. I may venture to tell your grace, that our friends here are not backward in what concerns themselves, though I dare not tell it to any body else."

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The emperor retards the conclusion of the peace.]

"*Hague, Dec.* 25, N. S. 1696.—My lord; The last letters from England brought us his majesty's approbation of the manner of his being owned. I believe there will be no difficulty in the points of Dinant and Luxembourg; that of Loraine, if we cannot get it included in the preliminaries in the manner we would, will be the first point decided in the treaty, as the emperor did once agree

to; but that court does every day bring difficulties of little weight, but such as serve to make us lose time. One would not think that those people were in earnest for a peace, but by the little preparations they make for a war. They take no care of the Rhine, and are not at all alarmed, though the french seem to threaten them on that side. An accident any where will be a great prejudice to our treaty, and the good disposition in which our nation may be, rendered fruitless. I am very desirous to hear that your grace is in health, and safe arrived at *London*; for no man is with more truth than myself," &c.

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Disputes concerning the place of meeting for the congress—Proposal to offer to France the choice of Nimeguen, Maestricht, or Breda.]

"*Hague, Jan.* 1, N. S. 1697.—My lord; The point we are now debating is the place of treaty: if we cannot agree amongst ourselves that it shall be at the Hague, we propose to offer France three places, Maestricht, Nimeguen, and Breda, of which they are to chuse one, which, most probably, will be Breda. Your grace will have heard that the king has declared the honour he designs me of being one of the plenipotentiaries. In this I shall have a particular satisfaction, by doing what I think will be agreeable to your grace, being, with very great truth and respect," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Regrets the objections raised by the imperialists—Congratulates him on his appointment as plenipotentiary.]

"*Eyford, Dec.* 26-*Jan.* 5, 1696-7.—My lord; I am sorry you perceive the emperor's ministers affect difficulties, because it looks as if that court were not so well disposed to the peace as I could wish. However, I hope you will get over all difficulties, and be one of the instruments to make this nation joyful for the present, and happy for the future.

"I think I need hardly trouble you to say that I am glad you are nominated one of our plenipotentiaries. It was so much your

due, that it could not be otherwise; and I hope you believe me so much your friend and servant, as to rejoice at all marks the king gives you of his confidence and favour."

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The french propose Ryswick as the place of congress—Will be readily accepted by all the allies, except the emperor.]

"*Hague, Jan.* 18, N. S. 1697.—Since I received the honour of your's of the 26th, we have had Callieres' answer as to the place. Instead of naming one of the three we proposed to him, he offers Ryswick, the french to live at Delft, and the allies here. I had orders to consent to this proposal, and every body here gives in to it very readily, except the imperialists, whose instructions exclude the Hague: they have writ to have this difficulty removed, and I hope we may have the thing effected, since we shall evidently gain time by being all ready upon the place, and that the treaty may be on foot before the armies are in the field."

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The emperor has conceded in some points, but has not yet consented to the place of meeting—Resolution taken to require Callieres to declare the preliminary points to the mediator, and to prepare the counter-declaration of the allies.]

"*Hague, Jan.* 29, N. S. 1697.—A courier, who has been long expected, is at last arrived from Vienna. He brings orders to the emperor's ministers, to desist from the difficulties they make in the preliminaries; and if the business of Lorraine cannot be adjusted in the preliminaries, as is desired, then to content themselves with a promise from the allies, that nothing shall be proposed in the treaty till that point is first agreed on. The emperor has given his consent to Breda, amongst the other towns he formerly proposed, but says not one word of the Hague; and, as the season advances, we think the necessity yet greater to have the treaty here, so that we shall come to no conclusion in this point till we have an answer to those letters to Vienna of the 18th, which more particularly pressed this affair. I am sorry to mark to your grace that these delays show little confidence in one

another, which at last must turn to the advantage of the enemy. It is a good while since we have had any letters from England. I hope the first will bring me news of your grace's better health; nobody wishes it more than," &c.

"Since I ended my letter to your grace, I have been at a conference, where it was resolved that Callieres should now declare the preliminary points to the mediator, that the allies should prepare their contra-declarations, to preserve their pretensions, and that the mediation should be required. I hope, by the time that this is done, we shall have the emperor's consent to stay at the Hague."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Is concerned at the delays and want of union among the allies—Hopes they will agree either to make a vigorous war, or a speedy peace.]

"*Eyford, Jan.* 30-*Feb.* 9, 1697.—My lord; I have several letters to acknowledge from your lordship. The last was of the 29th Jan. N. S., by which I perceive affairs move slowly, and not with such a cheerful agreement as I apprehend is necessary for a happy conclusion. I heartily wish they may mend, and that it may either turn to a steady resolution of making a vigorous war, or a speedy peace; for in the circumstances that such an alliance must be, no advantage is to be hoped from them by a tedious negotiation, and many things, in my opinion, may be feared.

"By the place from whence I write, you may conclude I am not well, though the physicians assure me, that with patience there is no danger. I am sure there is a great deal of uneasiness in this confinement, with all its circumstances; but I will not make it so to you by dwelling long on the subject."

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The belligerent powers have formally solicited the mediation of Sweden—Difficulties raised by Spain—The decision of the emperor expected on the place of meeting.]

"*Hague, Feb.* 7, N. S. 1697.—My lord; At last we have made a step in form towards the general peace. Yesterday the

emperor's minister, in the name of the congress, required the mediation of Sweden, of the minister of that crown here, without prejudice to the guaranty of the peace of Nimeguen, and that of Westphalia; and as the other ministers of the allies reserved the liberty to do the same, in the name of their masters, I have already required the mediation of Sweden in the name of his majesty. The ministers of the allies residing at Stockholm are to do the same there. The spanish minister does not concur in requiring the mediation, not being yet satisfied in the point of his re-unions: he would have this affair decided in the preliminaries, and the french offer to do it in the treaty (its proper time). I hope the spaniard will yield, or we are again at a stand; for till this business is agreed, we cannot have Callieres dictate the preliminaries to the mediator, which might be done with some regulations of the ceremonies, whilst we expect the news from Vienna concerning the place. I have nothing more to trouble your grace with, but to repeat my being, with very great truth and respect," &c.

On the 12th of February lord Villiers was enabled to transmit the preliminary articles proposed by the french minister, which were dictated to the mediator on the 10th. This declaration was in substance: The treaties of Westphalia and Nimeguen to form the basis of the peace; Strasburgh to be restored to the empire, in the same state as occupied by France; and Luxembourg to Spain, in its actual condition, as well as Mons and Charleroy, and the places in Catalonia. The same principle of restitution to take place in respect to the town and castle of Dinant, belonging to the bishop of Liege; the re-unions since the peace of Nimeguen to be restored, and Loraine to be rendered to the duke, according to the stipulations of the same treaty.* These articles were accompanied with a promise on the part of the king of France, that he would acknowledge the prince of Orange as king of Great Britain, at the signature of the peace.

* From the copy of the articles, transmitted by lord Villiers to the duke of Shrewsbury.

The duke of Shrewsbury thus expresses to lord Villiers his satisfaction on receiving this intelligence:—

"*Eyford, Feb.* 27-*March* 9, 1696-7.—My lord; I am glad so considerable a step is made towards the peace, as I find by your lordship's of the 12th; and I think it very advantageous to his majesty, that the world may see what relates to him will be no obstacle to the conclusion, when other matters are adjusted.

"In two or three days I shall endeavour to remove to London, finding myself much better since the warm weather is come, though my bleeding is not quite stopped."

We pass over minor objections, which were successively raised by both parties, and either satisfactorily adjusted, or referred to future deliberation. Nor shall we dwell on the death of Charles the Eleventh, king of Sweden, who acted as mediator, because this event caused no delay in the negotiation, which was still continued by the regency, during the minority of his son Charles the Twelfth. After much discussion, Ryswick, a palace of the princes of Orange, situated between Delft and the Hague, was selected for the meeting of the congress, and the primary proceedings are thus described, by the british plenipotentiary, lord Villiers, in a letter to the duke of Shrewsbury.

"*Hague, May* 10, N. S. 1697.—My lord; Yesterday our congress was opened at Ryswick; the pleinpouvoir of all parties was shewn to the mediator. In that of the french was only specified the emperor, king of Spain, and states-general, as those with whom they were to treat; but a general clause followed, which comprehended all those who were in alliance with them. This distinguishes his majesty as little as possible, since his titles could not be acknowledged. The rest we did was only to consent to an act, formed by the mediator, that any prince's assuming a title, should not prejudice another prince's right. The mediator gave the spanish embassador the answer to his list of re-unions, and to-morrow morning we are to meet again."

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Fears the siege of Ath will create obstructions to peace—The french have refused a cessation of arms—The negotiation languishes.]

"*Hague, May* 31, N. S. 1697.—My lord; I am glad to find by your grace's letter from Eyford of the 8th, that you are in a better state of health than you was. I fear the siege of Ath may make an alteration for the worse in our negotiation at Ryswick: the french have already given a proof of it, in refusing a cessation of arms, which was privately proposed to them; and if the town be taken (which I believe is unavoidable), I fear the king will hazard too much to repair this loss, as soon as the forces he has sent for from Germany may join him; and if the success be not altogether as we wish, it may cause a deplorable hindrance in the peace. Our Ryswick affairs are so much form, and contribute so little to the reality of things, that they are not worth my troubling your grace with."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Hopes the attack on Ath will not retard the peace—Is apprehensive of bad news from Catalonia.]

"*Grafton, May* 29-*June* 8, 1697.—My lord; I have your lordship's of the 31st, N. S. I doubt your affairs of peace at Ryswick do not advance so fast as those of war do before Ath; however, if nothing unadvised be attempted to relieve the place, I hope it will not prove of such importance, as to occasion any considerable alteration in your affairs. If those who pretend to desire a peace be sincere, they will not change their minds upon so small an advantage; and methinks it might be a proof to our friends, that the continuing the war would not be so advantageous as some would flatter themselves. I wish the next news from Catalonia does not give us a clearer and more fatal testimony of this truth.

"The warm weather has agreed so well with me, that I hope in less than a month to return to London.

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Slow progress of the negotiation—Demand advanced by the french for the payment of the jointure settled on the queen of James 2nd—Their conduct with regard to the acknowledgment of the king's title.]

"*Hague, June* 11, N. S. 1697.—By the papers which Mr. Prior sends Mr. Vernon, your grace will see in what state our negotiation is. The last answer which the french gave our imperialists appears more reasonable than what they said before, which gives me hopes that they will continue to have a mind to the peace. This treating by way of writing is not thought proper to bring any thing to a conclusion, and therefore the germans have been persuaded to put their differences into the management of the mediator. The dutch ministers often see the french, and do their utmost to finish this affair; though little appears visibly to be done in it, yet, considering the nature of the thing, I believe it is so far advanced, as at least we shall quickly know what we have to trust to. The english embassy is now complete.* We have had a conference to-day with the pensioner, where our own concerns were talked of; those of America the french are willing to establish upon the foot they were in before the beginning of this war: if they do not recant, they once said that they would neither directly nor indirectly assist king James by name. They ask that the queen's jointure should be paid her, which I take to be another way of asking an allowance for king James. They will hold to what they said in the preliminaries, as to the owning of the king's title."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Rejoices that a less objectionable mode of treating has been adopted—Hopes the french are sincere for peace.]

"*Grafton, June* 12-22, 1697.—My lord; There are two points in your letter of the 11th, that appear both very comfortable to

* By the appointment of lord Pembroke and sir Joseph Williamson, the latter of whom at this period reached the Hague.

me; first, that the germans have been persuaded that the method by writing was improper to bring things to a conclusion, and had therefore put their differences into the hands of the mediator. This looks as if they would no longer affect delays, which was one thing I feared. The second gives good hopes that the french are still in earnest, and desire a general peace, which I confess I apprehended more than the other. If these two things remain, as we hope and wish, I cannot see what can prevent a conclusion, unless some great success on one side or the other, which may alter their minds.

"I am, as I have been from the beginning, a very well wisher to peace; but if it cannot be obtained, I do not question but we shall be able to maintain the war, if not so well as some of our friends flatter themselves, yet much better than our enemies are persuaded we shall be able to do."

The hope which the duke of Shrewsbury here expresses for the speedy conclusion of the peace was far from being realised; for discussions now arose, which deeply involved the dignity and interests of the british throne. The following letters from the plenipotentiaries will obviate the necessity of any farther detail.

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Difficulty of obtaining from the french a specific promise not to assist king James—They propose to send him to Avignon.]

"*Hague, June* 21, N. S. 1697.—My lord; I have received the honour of your's of the 29th May. I very sincerely thank your grace for the good news you send me of your being better. Now that Ath is taken, the warlike affairs seem to cease, and give time to our negotiations at Ryswick. The concerns of England are actually on foot, and in the arrangement of our private negociators; the difficulty in this is to get the french to promise not to assist king James by name; they offer to do it in any other terms that can be thought of; and for a proof that they intend to abandon him, they have already resolved to send him to Avignon.

When this point is adjusted, we shall have nothing to do for ourselves that can raise difficulty; and then our allies will be pushed to come to a conclusion, which I believe will not be upon better terms. The whole is already in the preliminaries. The spanish embassador here does not seem much alarmed for Catalonia; but I fear he rather depends upon a neutrality, than upon any defence that Barcelona can make, which, according to advice, is now besieged both by sea and land."

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Communicates the secret project for a peace—Difficulties in regard to the recognition of the king's title, and the insertion of the name of king James—The french require the restoration of the Jacobites.]

"*Hague, July* 2, 1697.—My lord; Though my colleagues are of opinion that this project* should not yet be communicated to any body, I venture to send it to your grace, and should be extremely glad if you would honour me with your opinion of it, whether there is any thing in it unnecessary, or any thing omitted proper for our circumstances. The article in which the french are to promise not to help his majesty's enemies, is not inserted, because we will insist upon having king James's name in it, which I believe we shall not obtain. On their side they demand to have those who have followed king James's party restored to their estates, which our laws will not allow of. The king has sent for the pensioner to the army; I have reason to think it is to consult with him, how to put an end to our tedious negotiation. I believe our affairs will not allow of delay, but that it is better forcing France to declare its intention, and hazard the entering a-fresh into the war, than to be in the uncertainty we are. At the pensioner's return I shall be able to give your grace a more exact account of this affair, and at present assure you that I am, with the greatest truth and respect," &c.

* A project for a treaty, which had been offered to the french, and which was afterwards superseded.

"The project was given yesterday to the french by the dutch embassadors; they would not receive it from the mediator, the king's title being in it, whom they say they are not obliged to own till the signing the treaty."

Sir J. Williamson arrived at the Hague in the beginning of July, as joint plenipotentiary with lord Villiers, and in his two first letters communicates to the duke the state of the negotiation, of which the main point was the acknowledgment of king William's title. He, however, complains that the french peremptorily offer unreasonable terms, and hopes that their disappointment in the election of the king of Poland, and their failure in an attempt on Brussels, will induce them to relax in their demands.

SIR JOSEPH WILLIAMSON TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Hague, July* 2-12, 1697.—My lord; I have received the honour of your excellency's of the 23rd past, and return you most humble thanks for the favourable construction your grace is pleased to make of the poor respects I have at any time been able to pay your grace's name and interest, for which I beseech your grace to believe, I shall every where have that honour and regard that becomes me.

"Your grace will see, by the account I send Mr. Vernon, at what point the business of the general treaty sticks, I mean that part which is to make the peace between France and the emperor and empire, and between France and Spain; for as to this country,* the points lie in a small compass, and are such as relate only to commerce.

"There remains of the whole general peace, only what concerns our master, which, as your grace knows, consists principally in one point; the rest will be but articles of common form, of which we formed a project, which has been lodged in the french embassador's hands now near a fortnight, and, we doubt not, are under consideration at their court. What kind of answer we shall

* Holland.

receive, as to the main article, will depend a good deal on the event of three or four great things, which France seems to have in their expectations at present, one of as material a consequence to the whole frame of their affairs as any other, to wit, the election in Poland is fallen miserably cross to them; for though it is now said that the election was double, and that the french party did proclaim the prince of Conti, as well as the other did the elector of Saxony, yet it is not doubted here, but this latter will freely be settled on the throne. The siege of Barcelona falls out much otherwise than was reckoned upon at Paris. In Flanders they lose their time and their honour, by the wise and vigilant care of the king, who has gotten himself a most wonderful increase of reputation and love amongst all the allies, by that great deliverance of Brussels from being besieged, and their canal (the life of that and those countries) from being totally ruined, and laid even with the ground (for that appears to have been the great and secret design of France, in their last movements).

"We only want to be secured in one other hazard, the galleons, whereof we impatiently expect the news from England, which God grant us. I hope this will meet your grace, in full recovery of health, at London, where I shall presume (since I have your leave for it) to trouble your grace with the sequel of what passes in this place, and remain ever, with great respect," &c.

SIR JOSEPH WILLIAMSON TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Hague, July* 6-16, 1697.—My lord; * * * * The sum of all our matters seems to be this, that as the fortune or expectations of France now stand, the allies, that is, the emperor, empire, and Spain, are not to expect beyond the peace of Nimeguen, in which that of Munster, as they say, is for so far included and confirmed, together with the points first offered by France in the preliminaries, and beyond this it is not expected the french, in their intended project, will go: at least so they give it out beforehand. Nay, they add farther, that their master, since he finds himself thus hard pressed, to say his utmost conditions, will make them such as the allies must not expect, that he will admit any the least

change or arguings upon them, or any part of them; but to have their choice to accept or refuse the whole.

"Whether the events of those great things they pretend to have in their present expectations will justify to the world so peremptory a proceeding, time must shew us. In the interim there wants little more than the good news we are hoping for from England, of the total disappointment of Ponti's design on the galleons, to bring that king to speak more reason: for, as to Barcelona, they themselves give that enterprise for lost; and the king, by his wonderful conduct, keeps them at such a bay in Flanders, that their three great chosen generals know not, in a month's time, which way to turn them.

"As to our own matters, your grace knows we have but one main point, which, hitherto, they much stick at; but with good appearance, that finally (all other things on all hands agreed) that neither shall break the work. This we hope, and this we labour for. God grant a good event to all, and, above all, preserve his majesty's person, in which all the world are now especially sensible how great an interest they have."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Wishes to have the french strictly bound not to assist king James—Impatient to hear of his removal to Avignon.]

"*Whitehall, July* 13-23, 1697.—My lord; I have not troubled you a great while, though I have received several of your lordship's letters. I have expected, with impatience, to hear something of the late king's journey to Avignon, pursuant to what your lordship hinted in your's of the 21st of June. I should be glad to see so considerable a step made towards peace, though I confess I shall always wish him farther from hence than even that place. I did not importune you with any thoughts of mine relating to the project you were pleased to send me for the peace. The only things of chief concern to us are, the manner of acknowledging the king, and the engaging not to assist king James by name; but since glory has been the pretence the king of

France has made, to give us all the disturbance we have received from him, I hope care will be taken, that some expressions may be used, to engage that glory to suffer us to be quiet; and that, after the peace is signed, he may not be at liberty to attack us without forfeiting his word, and that honour he now pretends to be so tender of.

"We are impatient for the news we expect in three posts, which are now wanting."

CHAPTER 8.

1697.

Continuation of the negotiation, under the immediate superintendence of the king—Private conferences between the earl of Portland and marshal Boufflers—Arrangements relative to the acknowledgment of William's title; to the conduct to be pursued by France towards king James and his followers, and to the jointure of the exiled queen—Proceedings at Ryswick—Discussions on the german and spanish claims—Correspondence, from June to August, 1697.

WE now reach the second and most interesting period of this memorable transaction. William was not of a temper to continue a negotiation which afforded so little chance of a speedy and honourable issue. Aware that the delicate points in controversy could never be regulated at a public congress, where every proposal was to be discussed by the intervention of a mediator, he resolved to adopt a confidential mode of communication, which would at once enable him to ascertain the real disposition of France, and either facilitate a treaty, or terminate an injurious suspense. With this view, he proposed to the french monarch a meeting of two of their most trusty servants, who were to be guided by private and specific instructions. The overture was accepted by Louis, who had been disappointed by the failure of his attempt to place the prince of Conti on the throne of Poland, and considered, that a temporary peace would best enable him to divide the members of the grand alliance, and realise his views of securing the spanish succession in his family. Accordingly, he authorised marshal Boufflers to enter into a private treaty with the earl of Portland, who was deputed on the part of William. The negotiators met on the 7th of July, N. S., in the vicinity of the two camps; and, in five conferences, succeeded in obviating the difficulties which had suspended the public discussions.

The preliminaries thus arranged, were signed with the same secrecy, on the 3rd of August, in the suburbs of Halle.

The motives on which this mysterious proceeding was founded, the effect it produced, and some details of the discussion itself, will be best related in the words of the principal actors.

The first hint of this clandestine negotiation was conveyed by lord Villiers to the duke of Shrewsbury, in a letter dated Hague, July 12, N. S. 1697 :—

"My lord; I have the honour of your grace's of the 12th of June, from Grafton. By the letters we have just now received from England, I have reason to hope this will find you in perfect health at London. We have not yet received any answer to our project: the french expected to have found in it the article against king James, but his majesty rather chose to have that matter treated by word of mouth, and there is nothing yet agreed on about it.

"The pensioner is returned from the army, and I find by him that his majesty is of opinion, that this negotiation must be quickly made an end of, one way or other: the imperialists seem to be of this opinion, but the great difficulty will be, to bring them to like of those terms,* which we had rather accept than carry on the war. The french seem resolved to give nothing beyond the peace of Nimeguen, and I doubt if they would have given that in every point, if their designs this summer had succeeded. The king disappointed them, when he marched to cover Brussels, and there is great hope that they will have no better success upon Barcelona. There is no certain news of Pointis, which makes every body believe that he has done nothing. The elector of Saxony's being chosen king of Poland is a great blow to their ally, the Turk. There is a party that has proclaimed the prince of Conti king; but so inconsiderable an one, that it will come to nothing, the elector having a body of 10,000 men of his own, to maintain his right, besides the greatest part of the Polanders. These considerations, my lord, I hope will make the french more complying.

* So in the original.

"The mareschal de Boufflers has lately had a meeting with my lord Portland, near Halle. I am told it was about the peace, though I do not know the particulars; as soon as I do, I shall certainly communicate them to your grace, and upon all occasions shew myself, with very great respect," &c.

SIR JOSEPH WILLIAMSON TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the meetings between lord Portland and marshal Boufflers.]

"*Hague, July* 9-19, 1697.—* * * * We find, by the account the king has been pleased to send us of what passed between my lord Portland and monsieur de Boufflers, in the two interviews they had, that his majesty, being made sensible of the great wrong done him every where, by the false and dishonourable insinuations of the french, as if he had not really an intention or design for peace, (as that has been notoriously their business to spread abroad, in all these countries, these many weeks,) did at once resolve, and (as all people here think) with great reason and wisdom, to push the thing to a point, and at once as to do himself right against so venomous a poison as they endeavoured to infuse into the world, by declaring his real desires for a peace; and his resolutions, if it could not be had, no longer to be amused with a pretended negotiation of it at Ryswick; so on the other hand to put it hard and plain upon France, to discover how far all this pretence on their side is well and sincere; which is the very point all we, the ministers in this assembly, have been saying and wishing the thing might be at once brought to. And this step of the king's is the more reasonable, in that we are now come to the time (for to-morrow is the day) that the french are to give in their project for the peace they propose, between them and the emperor and the empire. This is what we are now this evening going to say to the imperial embassy, which has desired from us an account of what passed in these interviews. We have reason to hope that these things falling in thus luckily together, may forward us in the desire and design we have all along had (as your grace may have seen in our former accounts) to come to a true

discovery of the mind of France as to the peace; and how far they are sincere, in what they so liberally give out, every where, of their desire of it," &c.

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Farther account of the interviews between lord Portland and marshal Boufflers.]

"*Hague, July* 19, N. S. 1697.—My lord; I hear you are come to town and in perfect health. I assure your grace that nobody can receive that news with more satisfaction. The french have promised us positively to give in a project of peace to-morrow: the interview between my lord Portland and the mareschal de Boufflers will, I hope, contribute to its being reasonable. My lord Portland, by his majesty's order, desired the first meeting, and in it told monsieur de Boufflers that his majesty had heard that the french imputed it to him that the peace was not made; that his majesty thought himself obliged therefore to satisfy the world, that he really wished a peace, provided it might be honourable, and such as might last; but that he first took this way to let the king of France know his sentiments, and desired to be informed if that king did really design a peace; for that, otherwise, his majesty could not resolve to continue a negotiation which must be prejudicial to the allies. The rest of the discourse was what particularly concerned the king, as to the naming of king James, the followers of his party, and something relating to the principality of Orange.

"In the second conference monsieur de Boufflers told my lord Portland, that having writ to court, and received the king, his master's answer, he could assure him that that king was glad to hear that his majesty was so well disposed to a peace; that the king of France was wholly in earnest for it; and had given instructions to his ministers at Delft, to act to that effect; that he was resolved to give his majesty all possible satisfaction in the point relating to king James, except the direct naming him, which he thought could not be expected, considering the manner in which he had hitherto used that prince. As to what concerns his

followers, they seem not so much to insist upon it; and as to Orange, monsieur de Boufflers said, that his master would not think it reasonable, that it should be a place of refuge for the protestants, which, indeed, in a manner, is demanded in the article. This seems, my lord, to give us a fairer prospect of our affairs than we have had yet; I hope some good news from America may bring us to a speedy conclusion," &c.

SIR JOSEPH WILLIAMSON TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The french have delivered a project of peace with the emperor, Spain and Holland.—Considers the moderation it displays as attributable to the firm declarations of king William, through the agency of lord Portland.]

"*Hague, July* 23, N. S. 1697.—My lord; By my last, which was of the 9-19th instant, your excellency will see the expectation we were in here of the project which the french had promised. Accordingly, the next day, at the conference at Ryswick, the mediator came into the assembly of the allies, and there delivered the project; adding, as from the french, that it was not indeed altogether in the exact form of a project; but that it wanted not much in form: and, as to the matter of it, it contained the substance of such articles as concerned three of the puissances in war; to wit, the emperor and empire, Spain and this State. That there might possibly be found some particulars wanting, and some expressions not so exactly weighed; but that whatever was wanting might be supplied; and whatever in the wording might be found amiss, might easily be rectified. That, as to them, they were in great earnest, and most sincere in their desires of the peace, *afin d'etre hors d'affaire;* and that the sooner it could be done the better. This was the substance of what the mediator reported, as said by the french, upon their delivering him the project. After which he gave it into count Kaunitz's hand, who, by-the-bye, is observed on all such occasions to be the head of the assembly, and, as such, even to put himself forward, and to speak, and be spoken to.

"Yesterday, after the hours of devotion, the several parties sent their secretaries (as had been agreed the day before) to count

Kaunitz's house, and there took copies of it, a transcript of which I have sent by this post to Mr. Secretary Trumbull, to be presented to your excellency, and take leave, in the mean time, to inclose an abstract of it* (such as in this short time could be got ready) for your grace's perusal. There has not been time yet to understand what the several parties think of it; but, in the general, I perceive men think France has come nearer reason, in several points, than it was expected they would at this first step; and this is attributed to the seasonable and wise declaration his majesty was pleased to make, by my lord Portland, to monsieur Boufflers, which we find plainly, by the pulse of the world about us, hath had a very good effect, and has turned to great advantage of his majesty's honour and integrity in several respects," &c.

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The french have delivered their project of peace—Resolved to fix a period for the acceptance or refusal of the terms—New conference between lord Portland and marshal Boufflers.]

"*Hague, July* 23, N. S. 1697.—My lord; I am glad to tell your grace, that the french, according to their promise, gave in their project of peace to the allies last Saturday. Mr. Prior sends it this post to Mr. Vernon. You will find it to be on the foot of

* The principal conditions of this project were—

The treaties of Munster and Nimeguen to form the basis of the peace in general.

All the re-unions made by the chambers of Metz and Besançon, and the council of Brisach, since the treaty of Nimeguen, to be restored to the emperor. Strasburgh to be ceded in perpetuity to France, in return for the cession of Friburgh, Old Brisach, Philipsburgh, and Kehl, with their dependencies; and the Rhine to form the boundary between France and the empire.

Loraine to be restored to the duke as in 1670, on the condition that the fortifications of Nancy should be demolished, and a military passage through the duchy reserved to France.

Dinant to be restored to the bishop of Liege.

Treves to the elector, and the palatinate to the elector palatine, reserving the rights of the duchess of Orleans, as heiress to her brother, the late elector.

All the re-unions dismembered from Spain to be relinquished, and all conquests, both in the Low Countries and Catalonia, to be restored, except Luxemburgh, which was to be retained by France, in consideration of an equivalent. All captured colonies in America, and the West Indies to revert to the rightful proprietors.

that of Nimeguen. I believe we shall not get better terms from them, and shall have difficulty enough to bring the imperialists to accept of these; but I think, my lord, their necessity must oblige them to take the measures which England and Holland prescribe to them. I have heard secretly, that France designs suddenly to set a time for making the peace upon this project, or absolutely breaking off the negotiation.* I must own this method is a little unmannerly, but it is the only one that can bring us to any conclusion in this tedious affair.

"My lord Portland had, last Saturday, another meeting with monsieur de Boufflers; but it ended only in fair words from the french, without any thing determined in it," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Hopes that the interview between lord Portland and marshal Boufflers will bring matters to a speedy conclusion, either for peace or war—England is now more capable of continuing hostilities.]

"*Whitehall, July* 16-26, 1697.—I have received your letters of the 12th and 19th, N. S., and hope my lord Portland's interview will bring matters to a conclusion one way or other. If the french are in earnest for a peace, it will be very welcome; if they are not, it is necessary the world should see it; and particularly so with relation to his majesty's affairs here, that people may not too long flatter themselves with such deluding expectations, but prepare to carry on the war; which, I am confident, when we set our minds to it, we shall be in a better condition to do, than we were the last year, money growing much more plentiful in the country, and credit in town beginning now to recover.

"The french have had the fate of many projects to expect, and, therefore, it is not to be wondered, if they have not been forward to come to an agreement, whilst such prospects were in view. It is to be hoped, when they find themselves disappointed in all or most of them, they will grow more sincere; and if they offer what is safe and honourable, I heartily wish they may be taken at their word," &c.

* This report was soon afterwards realised.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO SIR JOSEPH WILLIAMSON.

[Approves the design of obtaining from the french an explicit declaration of their views with regard to peace.]

"*Whitehall, July* 18-28, 1697.—Three posts arrived yesterday, and brought me your excellency's of the 12th, 16th, and 19th, N. S. It is plain the french have been unwilling to come to any immediate conclusion, expecting the success of the several projects they had on foot. I hope the event will dispose them to be more sincere hereafter in their intentions for a peace. However, it was certainly well advised to push them to a declaration; which, I perceive, was the end of my lord Portland's interviews with the marshal de Boufflers. Uncertainties may be dangerous to his majesty's affairs abroad, and I am sure they are prejudicial to his interest at home.

"If the war must be continued, it is time the thoughts of the nation were disposed to it; and that they did no longer flatter themselves with the deluding expectations of a peace, but turn their minds to support the war with vigour and resolution; which I am sure they are better able to do this year than they were the last; and I do not doubt but they will be as willing, when they see no other means left, to save all that they have been thus long contending for. No man alive could more sincerely rejoice than I should, at a safe and honourable agreement; but if the enemy will give so much credit to the false accounts of their correspondents here, that it cannot be obtained, I hope they will find, though we wish a peace more than they, we do not want it so much," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Thinks the french project for peace reasonable, and ought to be accepted.]

"*Whitehall, July* 20-30, 1697.—My lord; Your's of the 23rd, N. S., has brought the best news I have seen a great while. The project of peace, which Mr. Prior has sent Mr. Vernon, seems so reasonable, that, in my poor opinion, it ought not to be rejected by any concerned, provided those matters which relate to the

concerns of the king, and the safety of the nation, be sufficiently explained and provided for; which, being not mentioned in that paper, I suppose are agreed in some other manner. Having said something to your lordship, in a former letter on that subject, I shall conclude with what has been my constant wish, that your negotiation may be short and successful. You can be employed in nothing more useful and agreeable to these kingdoms, nor more honourable to yourself."

The anxiety awakened in the mind of the noble secretary by these general hints, which he received from the plenipotentiaries, was now relieved by a brief, though authentic, relation from the earl of Portland himself; who, at this period, had considerably advanced towards the completion of the important work, in which he was engaged.

EARL OF PORTLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*July* 19-29, 1697.—My lord; I had great satisfaction in hearing that you had returned from the country in such good health; may God continue this blessing.

"Lord Sunderland can give you an account of what I wrote to him, concerning my interview with the marshal de Boufflers. At the last he dictated this article, that the king of France consents to have it inserted in the treaty, that, for the security of his majesty, he will give no assistance to king James, or to the Jacobites. There is no farther difficulty with regard to what concerns the king in particular. The king of France conveyed a solemn protestation, that he was sincerely desirous of peace, after the king, our master, had caused the same profession to be made to him. A term is fixed at the Hague for its conclusion or rupture: we shall, therefore, soon have it, or know to whom we are to ascribe the blame of the failure. If the business of the campaign do not indispensably oblige the king to remain here, I think he will approach the Hague, to hasten the negotiation as

much as he can, although it would not be very becoming in him actually to appear there. I am," &c.

" I beg you not to render this article public. I have just received your's of the 16th, but too late to answer it."

The duke of Shrewsbury was too zealously attached to the Protestant Succession to peruse this important communication without a considerable jealousy of France, and an anxious desire to obviate all causes of future trouble. We have already seen, in his letter to the king,* the objections he suggested to one provision of this memorable article; and we shall now find him no less frankly scrutinizing points of secondary consequence, in his reply to the earl of Portland :—

" *Whitehall, July 27-Aug.* 6, 1697.—My lord; I have received your lordship's of the 19-29th, with the enclosed articles dictated by the marshal de Boufflers; by which, I perceive the matters in dispute between the king (our master) and the king of France, are in great measure adjusted. I hope the allies, some way or other, will be prevailed with to be reasonable on their parts; and when they consider what a share of the expense England and Holland bear in the war, allow them to be the best judges when it is time to put an end to it. The article seems very strongly worded to prevent the king of France's fomenting any private rebellions, as well as assisting in any open invasion of these kingdoms; and the words " *that he will not disturb the king of Great Britain in the possession of his kingdoms," &c.* can only relate to our present king. Yet, since, out of decency, they make a difficulty to name king James, in which, impartially speaking, they appear to have reason, I see no objection why they might not name the king by name, William the Third, king of Great Britain; which would, more unquestionably, take away any un-

See page 170.

reasonable cavil that might hereafter be made, that, by the king of Great Britain, king James was only meant. I mention this as my present private thought, and in which it is very probable there may be little weight, but that you allow me to write with the freedom of a friend, as well as an humble servant.

"I must farther observe, that there is no care taken in this article to remove king James to some farther distance than Paris. I imagine the king of France will not think it proper or decent for himself, that he should live at St. Germains, or in that neighbourhood, whilst our king has an embassador at the french court: but I am sure it would be of very dangerous consequence to the king's affairs here, that king James should be permitted to live in any place, so near these kingdoms, that letters and messages might frequently pass, and that persons of consideration might have pretences of going, where they would have opportunity of discoursing with him, without its being visible that was their errand. To be convinced of the consequence of this, one needs but reflect on the advantage the present king, when prince of Orange, made of such a free intercourse, as was then between London and the Hague.

* * * * * * *

"Since I have writ thus far of my letter, I have discoursed my lord chancellor and chamberlain upon the article your lordship enclosed; and they both are of opinion, that the mentioning the king by name, William the Third, king of Great Britain, is of consequence for preventing future cavils. I am," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Thinks peace cannot fail—Honourable to the king to have settled this business in a fortnight, which could not have been concluded in many months at the congress of Ryswick.]

"*Whitehall, July* 30-*Aug.* 9, 1697.—My lord; I have your's of the 30th of July and 2nd August, N. S. If your journey to Breda was to hasten the conclusion of peace, I hope it will have the effect designed. I have had, within these three days, a relapse of my distemper, which ought to put me more in mind of

another world than it does; but I am charitable enough to this, whether I am to stay in it or not, to wish it were at quiet; for, after eight years war, one may be allowed to own peace would be welcome; and I think it is brought to a pass that it can not, it must not fail. For, as it will be counted one of the greatest actions of his majesty's life, to have settled that in a fortnight, by a method of his own, which he saw could not have been concluded in many months at Ryswick; so, if this agreement should now break off, he will have introduced a separate way of treating, which may prove infinitely hazardous to his own interest, if the precedent shall be followed by other princes; since all the allies, I doubt, are not so well to be trusted, upon the honour of their words, as they have had experience he is."

Lord Portland having formally imparted the terms which he had settled with marshal Boufflers, the communication was received by the allies with less satisfaction than had been expected, for the emperor and empire appeared to suspect that their interests were about to be sacrificed. On this point sir Joseph Williamson observes to the duke of Shrewsbury:—

"*Hague, Aug.* 9; N. S. 1697.—My lord; Since my last, which was of the 6th, we find, plainly, how little the world have expected so great an advance on the matter of the peace, as hath happily followed upon lord Portland's conferring with M. de Boufflers; and, indeed, how little some of them desired it. The emperor and empire appear most infinitely concerned at the likelihood there is, that the proposition from France for equivalents to be accepted for Strasburgh and Luxemburgh, should take place: not but that, secretly, the emperor is more than willing that it should proceed as to the first, the equivalents for that being such places as would fall into the emperor's own hands. And, therefore, we find these last days that the great cry is turned upon the other, that is, upon Luxemburgh; which is alleged by all those of the empire to be of that fatal consequence to them, that if it should, for any consideration, be left in the hands of the

french, they were undone; lost wholly in their liberty and safety; and that they must, in that case, be necessitated to seek it from France alone. This has been strongly exaggerated to us by the imperial embassy yesterday (the news of which, as they could be remembered afterwards, I send to Mr. Secretary Trumbull;) and this afternoon we are told we shall have a like attack from the body of the ministers of the empire, with desire to have their representations transmitted to his majesty, for his farther consideration, as a thing which they look upon to be of the last consideration and importance to them.

"As to our business, the french embassadors have not yet received from court, what they are to return as an answer to our project, but expect it daily; though they do, beforehand, speak of it to the embassadors of this State, who deal for us, that they look upon it as a thing that can have no great difficulty in it. Something they speak as to the point of the pension, or yearly sum settled heretofore on the late king James's queen, which they do not well know how it stands in fact, and therefore are not distinct nor clear in what they would propose as to that matter.

"The answer of the emperor and empire to the french project was given in by the ministers on Tuesday morning, but is of that length, that the french were not able to give any distinct answer to it on Wednesday, at the conferences at Ryswick, only they gave the allies to understand, by the mediator, that the king, their master, was very sincere in his desires for peace; and that the time pressed extremely to finish it: that, as to the point of Alsace, and the ten towns, it was a thing long since settled, and could not be admitted to be spoken of in this place. And, as to the term for accepting of the conditions, the mediator gave us to understand, that the french look upon it that they have sufficiently made the declaration of it, so as that it will be taken by them as the time beyond which they will no longer be bound to the same conditions," &c.

REPLY OF THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Acknowledges the receipt of his information on the terms of peace—Hopes the pretensions of the emperor, empire, and Spain, will not retard the conclusion.]

"*Whitehall, Aug.* 3-13, 1697.—My lord; I just now received your excellency's of the 9th, N. S. by which I understand one of the chief difficulties that will remain in the conclusion of the peace, is, whether France shall restore Luxemburgh or give an equivalent; the emperor and empire will be for the first; some of the other allies may, perhaps, hope a better security from the second. It is impossible, where interests are so different, to agree upon a point of this nature, unless all would generously consent to what should be thought best for the good of Europe, of which nobody can be so impartial, nor so exact a judge, as our master, whose name is glorious for his adherence so many years to the common cause.

"If the french will be stiff as to the day, beyond which they will be no longer bound to the conditions offered, I doubt that time is so very short, that it will be hard to get all agreed, especially if all are not willing, as may be apprehended. But I hope that and all other difficulties will be overcome to give us a good peace, which is earnestly desired in these nations."

The objections which the duke of Shrewsbury had frankly advanced to some clauses in the preliminaries, both in his letter to the king, and in that of 27th of July, to the earl of Portland, drew from his lordship an able and sensible reply, which will throw additional lights on the motives by which William was actuated.

THE EARL OF PORTLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Loo, Aug.* 2-12, 1697.—Sir; I am honoured with your's of the 27th, and am very glad that you approve the article which I sent you. It is as strongly expressed as could be expected; and,

as to what regards the future tranquillity of England, it remains to be considered, whether it would not be better that this expression should have a general bearing, namely "*to aid no one without exception or reserve;*" or, whether, if king James should be therein named, (he being old, and not likely to live long, but as a pretended prince of Wales may live long,) it is certain that he is included in that general period. Your remark, that the king of Great Britain is not mentioned by name, would be well founded, if that article were to be secret or separate; but as it is to be inserted in the general treaty, at the head of which the king is entitled William III. &c. &c., and as it is not customary to repeat the name at length in each article of a treaty, I think you will be of my opinion, that this cannot be otherwise than as it is.

"Of the necessity that king James should retire from France, I have spoken very urgently, even from the first interview. But the answer of marshal Boufflers was, that, as this could not be stipulated without naming him, it was not to be expected that the king of France would accede. Upon which I told him, that, in consideration of the king, his master, this stipulation should not be demanded; but I declared that the king, my master, expected the same regard should be paid to him; and that they should cause king James to depart, as soon as a peace should be concluded, without the appearance that the king of France was obliged to adopt this measure. And if this were not done, it must be concluded that he cared not for the duration of peace; since the king, my master, could never suffer king James to be so near England, as this would foment cabals, which the king of France promised, by this article, not to countenance. I even desired him to state this very positively in writing.

"He has since spoken to me of it, adverting to the place whither he might be sent, and even mentioning Avignon as the fittest for his residence. Hence I doubt not he will be removed from Paris, if France is sincere for peace. You will, doubtless, agree with me, that as it was necessary to conciliate France, I ought

not to expose myself to a decided refusal, unless I were able to maintain the point; and that it was better to take the thing as verbally granted, when I could obtain no more.

"Respecting the point on which you have written to the king, it is true that this article, separately considered, has no relation to the successors; but it is still to be remembered, that, at the head of the treaty, when the kings are named, it is also mentioned that they conclude this peace for themselves and for their successors, according to the contents of the present treaty. I beg you to consider that this article was sent from France, that marshal Boufflers could not alter a word; and that, in the existing state of things, I was glad to have it as it is; yet I have spoken of it to the pensionary, who was here yesterday; and if he can, he will endeavour to insert in the draught of the treaty* now pending, the word successors in the article itself.

"I am much obliged to you, Sir, for having done me the honour to transmit me your opinion, with that frankness which I beg you will continue, and I assure you that you cannot practise it towards a man more devoted to your service; but I also request you to consider the difficulty which I had in negotiating any thing, when there is such risk in speaking positively; and yet, when no weakness should be shewn. I intreat that you will continue to tell me your sentiments, and believe me respectfully," &c.

SIR JOSEPH WILLIAMSON TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Hopes the emperor and the german princes will desist from their opposition.]

"*Hague, Aug.* 3-13, 1697.—My lord; The dissatisfaction of our german allies at the equivalents proposed for Strasburgh and Luxemburgh, must be allowed to vent itself; and we take care what we can, to manage their heats and vehemence in these matters, ever and anon reminding them, how far their past per-

* This point was not granted, as Louis did not give any pledge in regard to the successors of William, nor did James remove from France.

formances are from giving us and the alliance any hopes of mending our case by continuing the war; and, therefore, on all sides, and most especially on that of the empire, it is become necessary to think of a peace. These reflections we find plainly do make the proper impressions, only a little patience must be had, till these ministers (who delight in long dispatches) may have shewn their masters what zeal and eloquence they have employed on this occasion. But, after all, the thing will be done; and, indeed, the french press us every day more warmly to do it, within the month, which is the term they insist they had declared to the mediator at the first, as the peremptory term, within which the allies must take or leave the french offers."

* * * * * *

SIR JOSEPH WILLIAMSON TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The germaŋ princes seem to relax in their opposition—The great point at issue, with regard to England, is the demand of the french, for the payment of the jointure of king James's queen.]

"*Hague, Aug.* 6-16, 1697.—My lord; We see, plainly, that now the imperialists, thus finding there will be a peace, and that the principal parties seem agreed to hasten it all that is possible, conclude it to no purpose longer to use any arts (as it is not unlikely but hitherto they have done) to delay it; and, therefore, have given into this way of personal conferences with the french at Ryswick, which is what they peremptorily refused to agree to some weeks ago. And, as to the points themselves, in which they have any considerable interest to be different, we think they will all be reduced to that one of the equivalent for Luxemburgh, (for, as to that of Strasburgh, plain it is, that they must rather wish an equivalent should be taken, though they dare not say so:) and, as to this of Luxemburgh, the opposition of the princes of the empire continues very high; though we find, daily, that they are more tractable in it, and, in a manner, prepared, when they have done and said what they can, to yield to the necessity

of the conjuncture. All that we have to say in it is, to convince them, that whatever the king (our master's) mind is, in this, or indeed, in whatever else can come in question, relating to the general and common interest of the alliance, in what part soever of Europe the thing lies, upon which the question arises, it cannot be suspected to be grounded upon any other consideration than what is best and most conducing to the preservation of the peace and liberties of Europe, from the ambitious designs of the common enemy. And that, in this point of Luxemburgh especially, his majesty, as head of this State, ought to be considered as most concerned, and, consequently, the most proper judge of the reasons for, or against, the equivalent in question. And, these representations, with a little patience, will, we hope, qualify that mighty heat this matter at first raised in them.

"We are now arguing with the french about the rest of our articles, in which nothing appears of much difficulty, only as to that of Hudson's Bay business, (which, at the bottom, is a branch of private interest of trading companies,) we are left without the necessary informations of fact, much more without able and full proofs of what is said, as to the original right, upon which all will turn. And, as to the late king James's queen's jointure, which the french stick hard upon to be made good, it is a point of that delicacy, that we are not willing hitherto to entertain it, as any matter of our present business. If she have by law a right, *she be to enjoy it; if not, we are not here empowered to stipulate any thing for her. And so we endeavour to stave it off from being received, as any part of what we are here to negotiate. However, it seems to be of use, if Mr. Secretary can do it, without noise or observation, to get an account of all that matter, how it now stands, what settlements were to be made by the marriage articles, if any? What of any kind have been made on her, and how far, according as the law now stands, those that have been made will take? &c. A private knowledge of this, if we could get it

* So in the original.

in time, might be of good help to us, to stave off the point, which, as we think, cannot so much as be openly treated on by us, without inconveniencies that will follow."

We pass over the discussions concerning the restitution or equivalent of Luxemburgh and Strasburgh, to direct the attention of the reader to points of more immediate interest to England, contained in a frank and manly letter from the duke of Shrewsbury to the earl of Portland:—

"*Eyford, Aug.* 18-28, 1697.—My lord; What I took the liberty to write to his majesty and your lordship has not, I hope, given either of you a suspicion, that I disapprove what has been treated towards a peace. No man alive more earnestly wishes it concluded than I do, and would less raise any trivial disputes to obstruct or delay it. What your lordship says for the not naming the king in that article, is so just an answer, that I have nothing to reply. What I mentioned of the removing the late king farther off, will, I suppose, be done in the method it is in; but I was so far right, that I perceive you would willingly have put it upon a greater certainty, but that there were inconveniencies in the pressing of it, that could not be overcome. The objection I made in my letter to the king, will, I fear, be generally thought one, when the article becomes public: not only the persons who seem the most nearly concerned, but every body else, will wish the addition made, which I proposed, for the sake of future quiet. I am glad, therefore, it is in a way of being done, if possible; and I can hardly conceive the french will make a difficulty of adding words, the sense of which is already in the agreement, if they mean fairly.

"My illness, before I went out of town, and being three or four days upon the road hither, is the reason I did not answer your lordship's of the 2nd sooner; and, upon this occasion, I cannot forbear mentioning my own uneasiness to be in a post that does necessarily require a strict attendance; and all the

while in a circumstance of health, that will not permit my doing it, nor give me a prospect of being capable, for a very long time, if ever. I know his majesty's goodness will forgive, and perhaps pity such infirmities; but the being obliged to neglect the service of so indulgent a master makes the affliction more sensible."

* * * * * * *

CHAPTER 9.

1697—1698.

Progress and conclusion of the negotiations for the peace of Ryswick—Signature of the treaty by the maritime powers and Spain—The Germans abandoned by the other allies, and compelled to submit to the terms dictated by France—Correspondence from August to October, 1697—Observations on the first partition treaty, as connected with the peace of Ryswick—Dissatisfaction of the duke of Shrewsbury.

AT this period of the negotiation, a series of events occurred, which threatened once more to frustrate the hopes of peace.

In Catalonia the french had continued to prosecute their advantages. An army under Vendome had marched against Barcelona, and vigorously attacked the place. The viceroy of Catalonia was defeated in his attempts to obstruct the approaches; and, after an obstinate defence, the garrison was reduced to the last extremity. This arduous conflict, which had long awakened the hopes and fears of all parties, was now brought to a close; for the court of Spain, to save the place from destruction, issued orders for an immediate surrender.

At the moment when the french were thus masters of Catalonia, and threatened Madrid, the spanish colonies were visited with a similar disaster; for the fleet under admiral Pointis captured Carthagena, and spread a general alarm throughout the defenceless provinces of South America.

The prospect of these misfortunes, which had vanquished the aversion of the spanish court to a peace, encouraged the french to rise in their demands. They availed themselves of the opportunity, to insist on the retention of Strasburgh, while they renewed their claim to the jointure of the queen of James the Second. They also succeeded in engaging the emperor in a direct negotiation; and laboured to conciliate the spanish court, by advantageous offers. The hints which escaped on this subject, in the

letters of king William, are still farther expanded in those of the plenipotentiaries.

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The business of the queen's jointure ought not to be introduced into the public treaty.]

"*Hague, Aug.* 16, N. S. 1697.—My lord; I have received the honour of your grace's of the 30th past. I am very sorry for your relapse, but I hope it proceeded only from some little irregularity, which it will always be in your power to redress; and you ought to contribute to it as much as you can, my lord, for the sake of your friends.

"The Pensioner has been at Loo, and since his return the dispatch of our affair is more pressed than ever: your grace will see the state of it by what Mr. Prior writes to Mr. Vernon. I cannot forbear telling you, that I hope we shall not have orders to give any other answer, relating to the settlement made on the queen in France, than that which we have already given; for I think we ought never to consent to have her name inserted, for her advantage, in the treaty, since king James has protested against it; and that the king of France took such care not to have him named in it to his prejudice.

"We expect the czar to be here in two or three days: the king will come hither to see him.* I believe his majesty heartily wishes the visit over; for, from what we hear, his muscovitish majesty is but scurvy company."

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Conferences of the imperialists and spaniards with the french plenipotentiaries—Unfavourable news from Catalonia and South America.]

"*Hague, Aug.* 20, N. S. 1697.—My lord; Since I had the honour to write to your grace, the imperialists have had a particular conference with the french, the mediator being present. They went through their whole project, but concluded on no one point but that of Philipsburgh; which could not admit of a dis-

* The reader scarcely needs to be reminded, that this was the period of the visit paid by Peter the Great to Holland, and afterwards to England.

pute. The spaniards have likewise been in conferences with the french: the dutch ministers assisted, with the mediator, towards the making these two parties agree, which I believe will be done without much difficulty. I wish I could say as much of the imperialists, who, I find, are resolved to be forced: I hope to see that quickly put in execution; though, indeed, the news of Barcelona and Pointis comes very untimely. I am not to acknowledge the favour of your grace's of the 3rd, without taking the freedom to acquaint you, that his majesty has been pleased to shew me a new mark of his favour, in making me an earl. I presume your grace will sign the bill for it as readily as you have done me many precedent favours; and believe," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Impatient to hear of the conclusion of peace—Doubts if the allies can obtain better conditions.]

"*Eyford, Aug.* 18-28, 1697.—My lord; My indisposition whilst I was in town, and my journey hither, have hindered me from answering your's of the 16th and 20th, N. S. till now that I am in the country, free from compliments and advice, which took many hours of my time when in London. I cannot say I am yet much better, but having found myself not worse with removing, I begin to hope the fresh air may have the same good effect it had at the beginning of the summer.

"I hope we shall soon hear the business of the peace is concluded, or that the french have consented to prolong the term they had set, beyond which they hold themselves no longer engaged to perform what they had offered. The first would put me most at ease. I fear the allies will never get much better conditions; and, since the misfortune of Barcelona and Pointis, they themselves ought, in reason, to despair of it; so that then the question will only remain, whether it is for the common interest to have peace, on the terms offered now, or renew the war, with a prospect to obtain better. The resolution, one way or the other, ought quickly to be taken; and if all were of my mind, it would admit of a short debate."

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The french refuse to allow the imperialists the option of Strasburgh, or an equivalent; and insist on retaining Strasburgh—The king declares against the equivalent.]

"*Hague, Sept.* 3, N. S. 1697.—* * * * My lord; I thought I might have sent your grace word that the business was concluded; but the unreasonableness of the french has put an ill delay to it. The spaniards, dutch, and we, were ready last Saturday to sign, if the french would have given a convenient time to the imperialists to come in; but this they have refused, and gave in a new project last Sunday, with the equivalent for Strasburgh, which I send you enclosed.* The step that his majesty has thought most proper to take on this occasion, is to declare against the equivalent, as well to shew his dislike to the proceeding of the french, as to let the world know he will not leave his allies, except he is forced to it by their own wilfulness. It is a good deal their fault to have brought things to this pass; and what the king does now, is more for his own reputation than that they deserve it. I am told that there is no danger in making this seeming resistance; for if the french persist in keeping Strasburgh, our friends here will have power enough to persuade us to comply; so that I hope there is no greater hazard in the business, than the loss of some time, and that I may yet tell you, before the winter, with how much truth," &c.

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[All business suspended—Distressed state of the emperor—Deprecates the continuance of the war.]

"*Hague, Sept.* 6, N. S. 1697.—My lord; At this great crisis, I cannot forbear troubling your grace, though I wrote to you last post. I find every body here (some out of a desire to the war) very angry at the proceedings of the french, which indeed are far from being reasonable. Every thing seems at a stand. Since my lord Portland left us, we have had no orders from his

* This equivalent consisted in the restoration of Friburgh and Brisach.

majesty: I hope those we expect will be such as will not let us, in the least, hazard our engaging again in a war, which I am sure has not hitherto been his majesty's intention; and, as I believe no new resolution of this kind will be taken, without consulting your grace, I take the freedom to tell you, that, in my opinion, we should close with these terms, unless it were in our power to oblige the french to better them. Since the taking of Barcelona they are entire masters of Spain; and the best we can hope from that kingdom is a neutrality. It will be impossible for the imperialists to do better than they have done: they have made no recruits this year for want of money. The prince of Baden was not able to take the field in time, for want of 300* pistoles from Vienna, which at last the commissary of the dutch troops was obliged to advance him: their officers in Hungary are driven to the last extremity for want of pay. You will judge, my lord, if these people are to be relied on, and if England and Holland will not bear the burden of a new war more than ever.

"Your grace does best know how England would like it, for the sake only of Strasburgh, or if the parliament would even think we were in earnest for a peace. I hope all this will be considered on this side the water, and that means will be found to overcome this last difficulty; but it is natural to fear while we are in doubt, and to complain to those who we think can prevent it. I shall be glad in a post or two to tell your grace, that these reflections proceeded only from my concern for the repose of England; in the mean time you will make that use of them which you think necessary, and give me leave to desire you to burn this paper."

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Interview between the czar and king William—The mission of the earl of Portland to Brussels has not advanced the negotiations.]

"*Hague, Sept.* 13, N. S. 1697.—My lord; I have been at Sandyke, and have had the opportunity of seeing the czar with his majesty. The interview between these two great princes was

* So in the original, probably a mistake for 300,000.

in a very dirty tavern, from whence the czar would not be got out, for fear of seeing too much company. The same reason hindered him from dining the next day with the king, though his majesty invited him. The behaviour of this man is very singular and capricious, though in some things he seems to have the genius of a great prince; but he is at too great a distance for us to concern ourselves about him.

"I wish I could give your grace some good account of what more nearly concerns us. My lord Portland is expected back from Brussels to-morrow. I have received letters to-day, by which I fear that his journey has not much advanced our affairs. I find the king wishes this business had been ended the last of August, for he apprehends that the conditions from the french will every day grow worse and worse, and their behaviour more insolent. At my lord Portland's return, I believe we shall make an attempt to conclude, by which we shall put the french more in the wrong, if we are so unhappy as not to be able to get out of this war, towards the doing of which, I know your grace's opinion has a great sway. I have only to add my wishes for your health," &c.

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Ineffectual meeting between Portland and Boufflers—The conferences renewed, with hopes of success—The spaniards ready to sign—The affairs of England and those of the Dutch on the point of arrangement.]

"*Hague, Sept.* 17, N. S. 1697.—My lord; This last conference between the generals has had no effect, and I believe one gentleman of Delft contrived their being brought together, to do nothing, to be revenged, in some measure, for what was done in the former conferences; but, provided, my lord, that our business is done, the manner of doing it is not very important.

"Since Sunday last our negotiation has been on foot again, and the spaniards have done all but signing. Our affairs are also concluded, and this afternoon the embassadors of the States are with the french to finish their's, and to adjust the whole, as well for the imperialists coming in, as for a general cessation of arms;

so that I hope, if the french really design making peace, we shall be wise enough to conclude it in a few days. The next satisfaction that I propose to myself is, to find your grace in perfect health at London, and to assure you then, that I am," &c.

We have already hinted that William almost wholly excluded his english ministers from any previous knowledge of his secret negotiations with France; and the ensuing letter to lord Villiers will prove, not only that this exclusion extended even to the duke of Shrewsbury, though the negotiation was properly in his department; but that his grace felt a degree of disappointment in the preference and confidence shewn, on this occasion, to the foreign favourites and agents.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

" *Grafton, Sept.* 8-18, 1697.—My lord; I have your's of the 3rd and 6th, and am very apprehensive we may repent our civility and complaisance for people, who appear to me unreasonable and unaccountable. Delays in a matter of this nature are very dangerous; and when one considers how much better the french affairs look now, than they did six weeks ago, one may fear they may prove prejudicial in this conjuncture; and unless the peace be concluded two days hence, or another short time appointed, for my part I shall despair of any success in the treaty. But if people are not prepared, and mind rather the manner than the matter of things, I do not see that the french have made a considerable change by their last memorial; since I always understood an equivalent for Strasburgh was more agreeable to the emperor and the great allies, than to the city itself.

" I so entirely agree with what you write in your's of the 6th, that if I could lay hold of any occasion, I should certainly deliver my opinion in the sense you wish, *but having never had any thing communicated to me*, (except M. de Bouffler's article, which my lord Portland sent me,) I know not how to be so impertinent to thrust myself into a business of so secret a nature. Besides, it may be more unfit than ever, since the circumstances of my health will,

in all probability, oblige me to retire from public business; and my physicians assure me I shall not be in a condition to bear the town a long while."

At length the discussions involving the interests of England, Spain and the States were terminated; and three successive treaties were signed on the 20th and 21st of September, between the french plenipotentiaries and those of Spain, England, and Holland.

To Spain France restored all her conquests in Catalonia, and in the Netherlands, together with Luxemburgh, and relinquished a considerable portion of those territories which had been usurped under the plea of re-union. By these sacrifices Louis obtained his purpose of conciliating the court of Madrid, and prepared the way for securing to his own family the reversion to the spanish crown.

He satisfied king William by acknowledging his title, and engaging not to assist his enemies, or trouble him in the possession of his throne; but, notwithstanding the representations of the duke of Shrewsbury, the name of king James is not found in the treaty; nor was any clause inserted to restrain the king of France from disturbing the successors to the british crown.

A restitution of conquests was also the leading feature in the peace with the States, who were still farther conciliated by a favourable treaty of commerce.

The emperor and empire were thus abandoned by the other allies, and having exceeded the term assigned for their accession, were left to struggle alone against the chicanery and encroaching spirit of the enemy. The succession to the crown of Spain, which ought to have formed a prominent feature in the arrangement, was thus passed over in impolitic silence; for the other allies having voluntarily renounced their right to enter into the question, all the attempts of the emperor to introduce it were peremptorily repelled by France.

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY, FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE LORDS JUSTICES.

[Peace signed with France and Spain.]

"*Ryswick, Sept.* 20, N. S. 1697.—My lord; We send Mr. Prior to acquaint your excellencies, that this moment we have signed the peace with France and Spain, and the States have done the same. I wish it may be a lasting one, and that your grace may have much satisfaction by it," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Rejoices at the conclusion of peace.]

"*Grafton, Sept.* 22, O. S. 1697.—My lord; I have several letters from you to acknowledge, but the last, of the 10-20th, brought so good news that has rejoiced all the world, and I hope will make his majesty happy and safe the rest of his reign. I heartily congratulate the great share you have had in the conclusion of this affair, and wish you may always have the same success, in what you may hereafter undertake; being, with great truth," &c.

The earl of Portland, who had been so active an agent in this arrangement, did not, however, partake in this unmixed joy which the return of peace inspired in England; for we find a manly letter from him to the duke of Shrewsbury, in which he disapproves the conditions, and unequivocally condemns the imprudent eagerness which had been manifested in the negotiation. In justice to a nobleman, who has borne so large a share of national odium, we cannot withhold this candid expression of his sentiments:—

"*Loo, Sept.* 14-24, 1697.—Sir; I congratulate you most truly* that peace is at length made; such as it is; for, in my opinion, though it is not much to the advantage of France, who pur-

* The other part of this letter, which relates to sir John Fenwick, is introduced in the correspondence with king William, page 117.

chases it dearly enough, yet we might have made it in a better manner, without permitting France to assume that haughty demeanor which she has manifested since the last of August, had we not testified an immoderate desire, and even a necessity, of making this peace. However, it will ease our affairs in England, provided we do not rely on, and trust to it too much, and we place ourselves in a condition to ensure and preserve it as it should be; which Heaven grant."

LORD VILLIERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Peace concluded against the wish of the other allies, particularly the germans—Regrets the intention of his grace to retire.]

"*Hague, Sept.* 24, N. S. 1697.—My lord; I have received the honour of your grace's of the 8th. By this time, I hope you have the welcome news of the peace. At last it was made against the will of most of our allies, though it is certain that these last conditions were more agreeable to the emperor than the former; but peace never was the design of the germans, but to keep England and Holland in an expensive war, whilst they made the best market they could of their troops. A point of honour had like to have made us their dupes, but Providence has taken better care of us. The germans, who must be forced to every thing with much ado, have consented to a cessation of arms upon the Rhine, and within the time, I believe, will conclude their peace. It is to be wished they would do the same in Hungary, which their late success may likely procure them.

"I hope it is more your inclination than any want of health that makes your grace talk of quitting business. If that should happen, without flattery to yourself, I am really sorry, both for the king, and all those who wish the government well. If you cannot bear the air of the town, methinks you might that of Hyde Park; I wish I had a better place to offer your grace, or any thing that I think could contribute to your health; being, with the most sincere respect," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD VILLIERS.

[Thinks the germans will be forced to conclude a peace—Hopes the king and his allies will continue united—Desirous of some stipulation for the removal of king James.]

"*Grafton, Oct.* 6, O. S. 1697.—My lord; I have your's of the 24th Sept., and though I believe it was not the real intention of the germans to conclude the peace, yet I suppose they will not think fit to continue the war alone. The emperor, I imagine, is well satisfied to be forced to take the equivalent, rather than Strasburgh; and is willing to bear the ill grace of being forced, when he might have it his free choice, to gain a poor excuse to the princes of the empire. However, I hope they will at length complete the peace of these parts of Europe, and that the king and his allies will conclude this war with so good satisfaction of each other, that they may join in some agreement to maintain this peace, if possible; and when that is no more so, that they may be in a readiness to enter upon a war, without the disadvantage of divisions among themselves.

"I should be glad to hear something were agreed upon about removing the late king farther from Paris. I should think it would be disagreeable to him to be so near, when our king has an embassador at Paris: I am sure it will have an ill grace for the king of France, and will very much disquiet our affairs. I am sensible this could not properly be inserted in the public treaty; but yet some care might possibly be taken of it. I mention this, the rather, because the uncertainty of his removing, and something about the Hudson's Bay company, are the only objections I have heard yet could be raised, by any of those who are most disposed to cavil; and I would fain have a treaty, which I am satisfied is so much for the interest of England, please every body as it does my lord, your's," &c.

THE EARL OF JERSEY* TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Objections of the french to the title of king of France introduced in the english form of ratification.]

"*Hague, Oct.* 18, N. S. 1697.—My lord; I thought our affair was finished, when I wrote last to your grace. Mr. Vernon will have acquainted you since with the difficulties which the french made in receiving our ratification, with the king's title of king of France in it; and I am glad to tell your grace that this matter is adjusted by a declaration of our's, that if this was not the usual style in ratifications of treaties of peace, and particularly in that of Breda, we would oblige ourselves to change it, which I suppose we shall never have occasion to do. Mr. Vernon will send you the act which explains the time of the peace taking place in the several seas; so now, my lord, I think we have nothing else to do, which makes me very impatient to be in England, where I hope to assure your grace that I am, with most entire respect," &c.

"My lord Portland waits here for a wind to go for England, in his way to Paris.† The king is not expected till the beginning of the next month."

THE EARL OF JERSEY TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The french advance new claims, with regard to the pretensions of the duchess of Orleans on the palatine succession—Hopes for cordiality with the germans—Wishes measures may be taken to obtain the removal of king James.]

"*Hague, Oct.* 22, N. S. 1697.—My lord; I have the honour of your grace's of the 6th. Our germans have not quite done; there yet remain the pretensions of madame,‡ upon the palatinate, to be

---

* In recompense for his services in this negotiation, lord Villiers was raised to the title of earl of Jersey, on the 13th of October, 1697.

† As embassador.

‡ Charlotte Elizabeth, sister of Charles, the last elector palatine of the line of Zimmeren, on whose death, in 1685, a contest arose for his succession. The electorate being transferred to Philip William, of the collateral line of Neuburgh, the allodial property was claimed by the duke of Orleans, her husband, in her behalf. The personals were pur-

determined. The french insist that the lands she pretends to, should be put in sequestration till the whole is decided, which the elector will not consent to, looking upon a sequestration as a dispossessing himself of the electorate. What makes this seem more unreasonable from the french, is, that they have once offered, that the elector should be in possession of the lands, and that madame should plead her pretensions in the ordinary courts of justice of the empire. I wish this business may end well; the french going from their word, shew what they would do if they had an opportunity, and how little we are to rely on any treaty made with them, longer than we are in a posture to secure ourselves. I believe that necessity will make the germans desire an alliance with us; but I doubt if any thing will ever unite them so amongst themselves, as to make that alliance useful to us, unless the emperor concludes a peace with the Turks.

"I agree with your grace in thinking that king James should be removed. I believe that will be a part of my lord Portland's negotiation; and the engagements his majesty lies under, that the queen shall have a maintenance, will be the best means to get it effected. Provided we have satisfaction in this point, I shall be less concerned about that of Hudson's Bay, and shall not much matter what many can object, since I find that the treaty in general is not displeasing to your grace."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE EARL OF JERSEY.

[Censures the chicanery of the french—Complains that they boast of having obliged England, Spain, and Holland, to enter into a separate peace—Repeats his wish that the allies may remain united.]

"*Eyford, Oct. 23-Nov. 2*, 1697.—My lord; By your's of the 22nd, which I had two days since, with another of the 18th, N. S., I understand the french are making the most unhandsome cavil

---

chased by the new elector; but a claim was still advanced to the principalities of Zimmeren and Lauteren and the county of Sponheim, as allodials, which was warmly supported by France. The question had been long the subject of a negotiation, which was suspended by the war, and, consequently renewed on the conclusion of peace.

with the elector palatine, of any I have observed them to attempt in the whole negotiation: I hope they may be persuaded to be more reasonable. I have seen letters from those parts, which say that the king of France's ministers do value themselves extremely upon having obliged us, the spaniards, and dutch, to sign separately from the empire, and think it will occasion a less confidence among the allies for the future. I should be sorry that they should so soon have those thoughts in their head; but if we act as we ought to do, and put ourselves in a good posture of defence, I believe they will have no inclination to engage themselves in haste in a new war. Nothing will tempt them to it but our appearing an easy prey; and, therefore, that I hope the nation will have the wisdom to avoid.

"I am preparing to go to London to attend the king at his return, and I hope you will have concluded so absolutely, that we shall meet you there, and give you joy of having had so considerable a share in procuring the happiest news that England has seen of some years. I am," &c.

Louis the Fourteenth had already found the advantage of detaching the duke of Savoy from the grand alliance, and to this advantage was now added, that of luring England, Holland, and Spain, into separate treaties; for the emperor was thus left almost to his mercy; and, after a fruitless protest against the desertion of his allies, had no other resource than to submit to the terms dictated by France. These, as might naturally be expected, were sufficiently detrimental to his interests and those of the empire.

France retained Strasburgh, in return for the relinquishment of Friburgh and Old Brisac, and consolidated the possession of all Alsace, by a stipulation to restore only the re-unions effected beyond the bounds of that province. The ground which had been occupied by military works in the islands and on the right bank of the Rhine, opposite Saar Louis, Huningen, and Strasburgh, was to be restored; but the forts and works themselves to

be demolished. To this was added, the restitution of Kehl and Philipsburgh, and all the other conquests in the empire, to the respective states.

The re-unions out of Alsace, and others, recapitulated in a list delivered by the french embassador, as made since the peace of Nimeguen, were to be restored.

But the spirit which had dictated these terms was more fully manifested in the article concerning Loraine. That duchy was indeed nominally restored, but on such conditions as rendered the sovereign a mere vassal of France, and the country itself an outwork for the invasion of the empire. The duke was to demolish all his forts and fortresses, while France retained the two strong posts of Saar Louis and Longwy, and the privilege of a military passage through the duchy at all times, and on all occasions.

But the treaty, though signed, was not so easily ratified; and both lord Villiers and sir Joseph Williamson mention a serious difficulty, which arose from a tacit agreement between France and the emperor, contrary to all former treaties, for suppressing the protestant churches in Strasburgh and some other parts of the empire, where they had formerly enjoyed toleration. Nor was it possible, notwithstanding all the attempts of William, to prevent the fulfilment of this clandestine engagement, and to restore the protestants to their former privileges, particularly as it was arranged with the connivance of the elector palatine and other catholic princes. With great difficulty, therefore, the protestant deputies were successively persuaded to sign the treaty, without obtaining any redress for their lost rights; and were obliged to content themselves with an empty protest, which was recorded in the register of the diet.*

Thus was concluded a treaty, which, instead of insuring the stability of the Protestant Establishment, and preserving the general tranquillity of the continent, created merely a pause in hostilities, and was little more than a disturbed and temporary armistice. Nothing, indeed, but the most urgent necessity could

* See the History of the House of Austria, ch. 65.

have justified king William in the acceptance of the terms to which he acceded, or in the mode in which they were concluded; and this necessity we think fully established by the tenour of the royal correspondence, which we have submitted to the reader.

He yielded, indeed, to difficulties, which he considered as insurmountable, and if there was a fault in his policy, it consisted in the manifestation of too great eagerness to ensure his object, and the vain persuasion, that his british subjects could be induced, in time of peace, to maintain a naval and military establishment, sufficient to cope, on the first emergency, with the standing forces of France. He was the dupe to these generous feelings and plausible opinions: the consequences were, personal mortification and disappointment, and the burthensome and injurious inheritance of a new war for the spanish crown, which was entailed on his successor.

The manner in which this negotiation was conducted and terminated, was perhaps not less objectionable and impolitic than the conditions of the arrangement itself. The cautious exclusion of the english ministry from a transaction in which England was so deeply interested, was unjust towards them, as well as towards the country to which they were constitutionally accountable, for the engagements the monarch was supposed to form with their advice and participation. That the duke of Shrewsbury in particular, was mortified by this reserve, his letters sufficiently shew; and we cannot doubt that the aversion he felt to become responsible for proceedings, over which he had no control, essentially contributed to increase that dislike to public life, which breaks forth in every part of his correspondence.

One error in policy, however, usually generates another, and if William can scarcely be excused for the conclusion of this unfavourable pacification, his conduct is still less to be commended in the negotiation for the first treaty of partition, which may be considered as the natural and almost inevitable consequence of the peace of Ryswick.

Having abandoned the interests of the House of Austria, he had no plea for interference in the future disposition of the spanish

monarchy; and was therefore compelled to accept the propositions of France, on a subject so important to the welfare of Europe, with little power of modification or control. This negotiation was commenced in the same clandestine manner as the discussions for the peace of Ryswick, and was prosecuted with a degree of mystery and reserve, sufficiently indicative of the opposition it was expected to create in England. So far was the king from recurring to the advice of his english ministers, that it was conducted through pensionary Heinsius and the earl of Portland, and imparted only to the principal members of the cabinet, when it became necessary to pass a commission under the great seal for its conclusion. Even then the sole communication was through lord Portland and secretary Vernon to the lord chancellor, who was empowered to open the matter only to such as he thought proper.*

We shall enter no farther into the details of this negotiation than as the duke of Shrewsbury was concerned. It appears that he received from the lord chancellor a communication on the subject; and that Mr. Montague and lord Orford were likewise consulted. But Shrewsbury seems to have prudently abstained from giving any specific opinion on so delicate a point; or, at least, no trace of his sentiments can be found in the papers still extant. From the few letters of Mr. Vernon, we discover that an interview took place at Tunbridge, between the chancellor, Mr. Montagu, and Mr. Vernon himself; and the result of their deliberations was, a letter from the chancellor to the king, expatiating on the difficulties to be apprehended from the intended arrangement; the objections which would unavoidably be raised in England to many of the conditions; and lamenting the fatal want of spirit which prevailed throughout the country. He did not, however, venture to oppose the conclusion of the treaty, but

* The history and details of this partition treaty are too well known to need recapitulation, and the only correspondence of any value relating to it has already been printed in Rapin and the contemporary historians. The few particulars concerning the duke of Shrewsbury are taken from Mr. Vernon's correspondence with the duke, August 20, 23, and 30, 1698, and the chancellor's letter to Mr. Vernon, August 20.

dispatched the blank warrants, and submitted the final decision to the superior wisdom and political experience of the king. On these grounds the negotiation was brought to a conclusion, without any farther communication with the english ministry.

This treaty was soon rendered nugatory, by the death of the electoral prince of Bavaria, to whom Spain and the Indies were assigned; but the general dissatisfaction it created,* added to the mortification arising from the want of confidence manifested towards the duke of Shrewsbury, appears to have been another cause which accelerated his retirement from office.

The caution which he displayed on this occasion is a striking proof of his increasing aversion to the part he reluctantly continued to act, and at the same time it contributed to screen him from that persecution which Somers, Orford, and Halifax afterwards underwent, for the limited and secondary share they were permitted to take in a treaty of such vital importance.

* The conditions of this celebrated treaty were:—Spain and the Indies, with the Netherlands, were assigned to the electoral prince of Bavaria, and the Milanese to the archduke Charles; but, as a compensation for the claims of the Bourbon family to the spanish succession, the dauphin was to receive Naples and Sicily, with the dependencies of Spain on the coast of Tuscany, the marquisate of Finale, and the province of Guipuscoa, including the towns of Fuentarabia, St. Sebastian, and Port Passage, which were eventually to be annexed to the crown of France.

PART III.

Correspondence with the Whig Leaders, and lord Sunderland, from 1695 to 1700.

PART III.

CHAPTER 1.

1695.

Characters of Lords Sunderland, Somers, Orford, and Wharton, and Charles Montague, afterwards lord Halifax—Correspondence on the proposed convocation of a new parliament.

HAVING exhibited the character and feelings of the king, and traced the motives of his conduct, in the foregoing pages, we now advert to the feuds in the cabinet, and the details of ministerial arrangements, as developed in the correspondence of the duke of Shrewsbury with lord Sunderland and the whig chiefs.

To elucidate these documents, we shall here briefly sketch the characters of the writers.

Robert, earl of Sunderland, who forms a prominent figure in the subsequent pages, was son of Henry, first earl of Sunderland, who fell at the battle of Newbury, in the royal cause, of which he was a zealous and distinguished supporter. The services of the father produced a predilection in favour of the son, and after the Restoration he was distinguished by marks of royal beneficence. His natural abilities being improved by a liberal education, and polished by foreign travel, he was initiated at an early period in public business, being sent, in 1671, as embassador to the court of Madrid. From the satisfaction which he gave in this post, he was, in the following year, selected to fill the embassy to Paris, at a time when the negotiations with the court of Versailles were of the most secret and confidential nature. He was deputed as one of the plenipotentiaries to the

congress of Cologne in 1673, and soon after his return to England, in the ensuing year, was made a privy counsellor.

In 1678 he replaced Mr. Montague* in the embassy at Paris; and having acquitted himself greatly to the satisfaction of the sovereign, during the negotiations for the peace of Nimeguen, he was, in 1679, promoted to the office of secretary of state, in conjunction with sir William Temple. A contemporary historian, who knew him well, observes, "He was a man of great expense, and, in order to the supporting himself, went into the prevailing councils at court; so he changed sides often, with little regard either to religion or the interest of his country. He raised many enemies to himself, by the contempt with which he treated those who differed from him. He had, indeed, the superior genius to all the men of business that I have yet known; and he had the dexterity of insinuating himself so entirely into the greatest degree of confidence, with three succeeding princes, who set up on very different interests, that he came by this to lose himself so much, that those who esteemed his parts, depended little on his firmness."†

A nobleman of so subtle and insinuating a character could not fail to acquire and retain power, under the crooked policy, which marked the reigns of the two last Stuarts. Accordingly, though he had, on several occasions, favoured the popular party, and at one time had even taken an active share in supporting the exclusion bill, he contrived to regain his influence; and, on the accession of the duke of York, under the title of James the Second, we find him in full possession of the royal favour, and holding the post of prime minister, with the two offices of president of the council and secretary of state. He even sacrificed his religion to his politics; and gratified his bigotted sovereign, by embracing the roman catholic faith, and by taking a leading part in the prosecution of the seven bishops. His sagacity led him, however, to foresee, that the precipitate counsels of James

* Ralph, afterwards duke of Montague.

† Burnet's History of his Own Times.

would speedily terminate in ruin; and we find the Proteus statesman caballing with the prince of Orange, and betraying to him the secrets of the cabinet. His infidelity being suspected, he was removed from all his offices, a short period before the Revolution.

At that crisis he continued his secret correspondence with the prince of Orange, till the fear of detection prompted him to embark for Holland, at the moment when William was about to land in England. Here he gave a death blow to the cause of James, by publishing his celebrated justificatory letter,* in which he developed the plans of that misguided monarch, and his roman catholic advisers, for subverting the religion and liberties of his country.

He was, however, so unpopular, that, notwithstanding his services, he was arrested by the States; and, though liberated by order of the new sovereign, was excluded from the benefit of the act of indemnity passed in 1690. Having involved his fortune, by his expensive habits, he was reduced to great streights, in consequence of the loss of his lucrative offices; but his interests were supported by the earl of Marlborough, and other friends who had assisted in the Revolution, and who, by their influence with William, procured him a share of the royal bounty.

During this part of his exile, his political sagacity, sound judgment, and intimate acquaintance with the character of his countrymen and the temper of parties, won the confidence of William, who was chiefly guided by his advice, in the critical period which succeeded the abdication of James. On the change of sovereigns he again returned to the protestant church; and, as soon as a favourable opportunity offered, was recalled to his native country; and, by his suggestions, contributed to the reconciliation between William and the whigs, which led to the introduction of several of that party into the administration, and the subsequent appointment of Shrewsbury as secretary of state.

He thus succeeded in conciliating the whigs; and, though he remained for some time in a private capacity, was supported by

* Printed in the History of Europe, and other periodical publications.

a pension of 2,000*l.* per annum from the king. He continued to increase in favour, acted as mediator between the king and the whigs, on various occasions, and, in 1695, was honoured by a royal visit at Althorpe, his country seat. This distinction was the prelude of his appointment to the office of lord chamberlain, in April, 1697, in which all the members of administration appear to have concurred, from a sense of the advantages likely to be derived from his personal influence and interposition with the king.

From the ensuing correspondence we shall find him in the closest habits of intimacy with the duke of Shrewsbury, whom he resembled in political discernment and amenity of manners, as well as in timidity of character; but he could never vanquish the suspicion which the whigs naturally entertained of a nobleman who had been the favourite and confidential minister of James; and of whose influence with the actual sovereign they were jealous, even while they experienced its beneficial effects.

Of this we have a remarkable proof, in the observations of admiral Russell to Shrewsbury, as early as August, 1696, in reply to the information of the duke, that Sunderland was about to pay him a visit, and that he would find him "in good humour, mighty right, and more than ever for the whigs:"

"*Chippenham, Aug.* 11, 1696.—I am under some pain about the honour designed me by a great lord. I confess my fault and folly, that I cannot bring my tongue nor countenance to seem satisfied with a man I am not; but will do in it as well as I can. You say he is very much for us; it was plain that was his design to appear, when he writ to Felton about coming hither, and complaining of some friend of his wanting friendship. It is an old saying, 'when the fox is abroad, look to your lambs.' No man is ever secure from his tricks; but he can play none very prejudicial, if he be not too much trusted and relied upon. If I had lord Marlborough's art, I could use him in his own way; but I will do my best to learn as much as I can from the lord, and not let him know my thoughts; after which, you shall be sure to know what has passed between us."

John Somers, so distinguished for his patriotism, politeness, talents, and legal knowledge, was born at Worcester, on the 4th of March, 1650. He was the son of an eminent attorney of that city, who, during the civil troubles, had served in the army of Cromwell, but quitted the military life, after the battle of Worcester, and returned to his professional practice and the enjoyment of a competent fortune.

The son acquired the rudiments of learning at a private school,* and completed his education at Trinity College, Oxford; where he distinguished himself by his classical attainments, and is mentioned as author of several productions both in verse and prose. Entering at the Middle Temple, he prosecuted the study of the law with his characteristic assiduity, and became eminent as a counsel at the early age of thirty.

The employment of his father, as agent for the Talbot property in Worcestershire, appears to have introduced him, at an early period, to the knowledge of the young nobleman, who was afterwards duke of Shrewsbury; and a similarity in principles, talents, and pursuits, led him also to an intimacy with lord Russell, Algernon Sidney, and other patriots of the time.

Though he did not enter into the plots and machinations which were so fatal to his two friends, Sidney and Russell, he employed his pen in exposing the arbitrary measures of Charles the Second, and published several political tracts, which made a considerable impression. From his known hostility to arbitrary government, his zeal for the protestant establishment, and his legal celebrity, he was selected, in 1688, to plead the cause of the seven bishops; and his manly and pathetic speech on this memorable occasion, to use the words of a contemporary writer, "will remain among those memoirs of our english constitution, which shall transmit the fame of worthy men to all posterity."†

* So little of the early age and education of this great man is known, that all attempts to discover the register of his birth, and the seminary in which he was educated, have been fruitless, though it is generally reported that he was first sent to a private school in Shropshire.

† Peerage of 1715, art. Somers.

Nor did he belie, in his public conduct, the principles of which he was the advocate. He concurred in promoting the Revolution; and the confidence reposed in his zeal and patriotism was marked by his election, as one of the representatives of his native city, in the convention parliament. He took a leading share in the discussions on the new settlement; and, as one of the managers of the House of Commons, ably defeated the machinations of those who laboured to prevent the elevation of William to the throne. To his legal acuteness, and profound reasoning, we may chiefly attribute the insertion of the word ABDICATED, in the act of settlement, which was the foundation of William's title to the crown.

Such services, joined to his high integrity, multifarious acquirements, influence with his party, and legal reputation, ensured the gratitude and esteem of our great deliverer. Accordingly, Mr. Somers was appointed solicitor-general in May, 1689, and attorney-general in May, 1692. These promotions were the prelude to a higher elevation; for in 1693, when William was desirous of shewing his returning confidence towards the whigs, he gave a satisfactory proof of his favour to their party, by conferring on Mr. Somers the office of lord keeper, with the honour of knighthood.

At the period when the correspondence commences, Somers was regarded as the leader of the whig party; and while his prudence and mildness checked the intemperate zeal of his more ardent colleagues, his rectitude, candour, and capacity for business, secured the confidence of the sovereign. His early acquaintance with the duke of Shrewsbury, now prime minister, had also mellowed into friendship; and their mutual esteem is marked in every page of their epistolary intercourse.

Edward Russell, afterwards earl of Orford, was second son of Edward, earl of Bedford, and brother of the celebrated lord Russell. He was born in 1652, and, being bred to the sea, attracted the notice of the duke of York, and became one of the gentlemen of his bedchamber. On the execution of his brother, he quitted the court in disgust, withdrew from the service, and

entered into correspondence with the prince of Orange, preparatory to the Revolution. For this purpose he removed to Holland, and accompanied the prince on his successful expedition to England.

In reward for his attachment and services, he was nominated a privy counsellor by the new monarch. In 1688 he was appointed admiral of the blue, and soon afterwards created treasurer of the navy, and intrusted with the command of the fleet, on which the safety of the nation depended. He defeated the intended invasion from France, by his celebrated victory off La Hogue, in 1692; but, on the transfer of the administration from the whigs to the tories, his great services did not exempt him from sharing the fate of his party.

The want of his energy and skill was, however, soon felt in every department of the naval service; and in restoring him to the command of the fleet, in 1693, the king did not less consult the public welfare, than his own wish to regain the confidence of the whigs. This proof of royal favour was soon followed by his appointment as first commissioner of the admiralty; and he was selected by the king to fulfil the arduous and responsible tasks of regaining the naval ascendancy in the Mediterranean and of repelling the threatened invasion from France, in the year 1696; both of which services he accomplished with equal ability and success.

Impetuous, aspiring, and interested, Russell continually offended the king, by his blunt and craving temper; and was himself an unceasing prey to fretfulness and discontent. Hence his frowardness frequently marred the merit of his great services; and, he so far manifested his spleen, that he was suspected of maintaining an occasional correspondence with the exiled family; though the actions of his life, and the frankness of his temper, perfectly exonerate him from the imputation.

At this period he was esteemed by his party as their most distinguished leader, next to lord Somers; and united in his own person the incompatible offices of first lord of the admiralty and

treasurer of the navy; though no one could have been selected, more competent to fill such important posts, nor more justly entitled to them by his eminent services.

A long and intimate friendship had subsisted between him and Shrewsbury, which was cemented by a similarity in political principles, and by their joint labours in the cause of the Revolution; to which they were both, no less ardently than inviolably attached.

Thomas, afterwards baron, earl, and marquis of Wharton, was descended from a noble family, being the eldest son of Philip, lord Wharton. He was born about 1640, and brought up in the principles of the dissenters; while from his father, who had embraced the cause of the parliament, during the civil troubles, he imbibed notions of government approaching to republicanism. Conforming, however, to the established church, he served in several parliaments after the Restoration; and, though a companion in the revels of Charles the Second, he figured in the ranks of opposition to the court. In fact, he manifested so much violence, that in 1677 he was committed to the Tower, with the duke of Buckingham and the earl of Shaftesbury, for questioning the legality of the sitting parliament. With such a character he could not fail to be a warm, strenuous, and dangerous opponent of the arbitrary measures of James the Second. Accordingly, he was among the first who made overtures to the prince of Orange; and is said to have assisted in drawing up the plan of the celebrated declaration, inviting him to England. He joined the prince at Exeter, and took an active share in the settlement of the new government.

His zeal and services were rewarded in February, 1689, with a seat in the privy council, and the post of comptroller of the household, and he zealously supported the whig administration. But on the introduction of the tory ministry, he was so offended with the dismissal of his friends, that he sent an anonymous letter to the king, penned in the most vehement style, and reproaching him with his ingratitude to those who had placed him on the

throne.* Notwithstanding the revolution in the ministry, he, however, still retained his office in the royal household; and was confidentially consulted by the king, when he determined to make a new change, in favour of the whigs, and was anxious to restore the seals to the duke of Shrewsbury. Wharton vigorously supported all the measures of his party, and, in particular, was selected to carry up to the lords the impeachment against the duke of Leeds. On the 24th of February, 1695-6, he took his seat in the House of Peers, in consequence of the death of his father.†

Wharton was of an ardent and impetuous temper, ambitious of distinction, and anxious to fill an elevated post in the state; for which he was doubtless qualified by his energy and abilities. He was a bold, able, and fluent, though coarse and turbulent speaker; but a master of the passions and prejudices of those whom he addressed, and calculated to shine in the tumult of elections and popular assemblies. He, however, disgusted the more sober part of mankind, by his open profession of infidelity; and he was disliked by the advocates of monarchy, for his tendency to republican manners and republican principles.

Such a character sufficiently accounts for the antipathy conceived against him by William; who, though conscious of his talents and services, yet dreaded his aspiring temper, and was disgusted with his haughty demeanor.

Notwithstanding his defects, Wharton stood high in the estimation of his party, who admired his inflexible adherence to their principles, and appreciated his abilities and activity. Hence we cannot wonder that they supported his pretensions with indefatigable zeal and perseverance, and even sacrificed their own interests for the gratification of his wishes.

Far different in temper and character was the last correspondent

---

* This letter was found in the king's cabinet after his death, and is justly ascribed to Wharton, by Dalrymple, who has printed it in the second volume of his history, 8vo. edition, appendix to v. 2, p. 187.

† Journals of the Lords.

whom we shall have occasion to notice. Charles Montague, afterwards so honourably distinguished, under the title of earl of Halifax, was the grandson of John, duke of Manchester. He was born at Horton, in Northamptonshire, in 1661; and as his father, George Montague, was a younger son, no attention was spared, to enable him to maintain that rank by his talents, to which he was entitled by his birth. He commenced his education in the country; and afterwards removing to Westminster, he acquired the favour of the celebrated Dr. Busby, by his ready wit and classical attainments. At the university of Cambridge he was placed under the care of his relation, Dr. Montague, master of Trinity College, and formed an intimacy with sir Isaac Newton; which continued unabated till the death of that great philosopher.

Attracting the notice of the earl of Dorset, the general patron of merit, he was introduced to the most celebrated wits of the age; and, among his other productions, joined with Prior, in the composition of the "City and Country Mouse," a parody on Dryden's Hind and Panther.

Soon afterwards he sacrificed literature to politics, and, joining the other branches of his family, signed the invitation to the prince of Orange. He was chosen a member of the convention, and devoting himself to public life, purchased the place of a clerk of the council.

He speedily distinguished himself in the House of Commons, by his splendid eloquence, sound judgment, and knowledge of finance. His solid acquirements were embellished by elegant taste, social qualities, and captivating manners; and he was no less beloved than esteemed by his party.

After taking an important share in the debates on the new law for trials of high treason, he was appointed, in 1691, a commissioner of the Treasury, a post for which he was eminently qualified by his genius for finance. From the talents and diligence, which he displayed in this subordinate station, he was raised to the second place at the board; and appointed chancellor of the exchequer, in

the year 1694, when the new ministerial arrangement was made in favour of the whigs.

Notwithstanding the fervid eloquence of Wharton, Montague was regarded by his party, as their ablest champion in the House of Commons, and considered as their most skilful opponent to the tory leader, Harley, on questions of domestic economy and finance. Next to Somers, he was the whig most esteemed by the king, not only for his sterling sense, and useful talents, but for that amenity of manners, which his majesty so much admired in the duke of Shrewsbury.

After these brief sketches, a single observation will suffice to shew the character and value of this correspondence. The duke of Shrewsbury, to whom these eminent statesmen addressed themselves, on all occasions, was selected by the king as the head of the administration; from the conviction that he was beloved and respected by all parties, while he was regarded by the whigs as identified with themselves, and ostensibly their leader. Hence he was continually employed as a mediator between the sovereign and his whig friends; and, in all cases, both parties confidently referred to his judgment and decision.

The correspondence of this year, though brief, is yet interesting, as it relates to the dissolution of the last parliament, convoked before the death of queen Mary, and exhibits the difficulties of these distinguished statesmen, at a critical period of our annals.

The first letter in this series is an elegant effusion of friendship. It accompanied some mark of royal favour to the lord keeper Somers,* and shews that this disinterested patriot, and consummate lawyer, had repeatedly refused a title.

---

* This letter is printed in the Hardwicke collection, and is supposed to have accompanied the warrant of a barony; whereas, it appears, from the Journals of the House of Peers, that sir John Somers then sat in that house, as lord keeper, and was not raised to the dignity of baron till the 2nd of December, 1697, in which quality he was introduced into the house on the 14th. The warrant mentioned in this letter was probably some grant.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD SOMERS.

"*May* 8-18, 1695.—My lord; I had his majesty's commands last night, to have waited on your lordship this morning with the inclosed; but being informed that you are not at home, I take the liberty to send it you. I had directions to have said every thing I could imagine, to persuade you to accept of a title, and the king is really convinced it is for his service you should. I beg the answer I may have may be a bill for the king's signing. As for arguments, I have used all I have already; and by your objections, you may give me leave to tell you, that you are as partial and unreasonable, with too much modesty, as some are with too much ambition. I hope you will not only pardon me for telling you your fault, but that you will correct it; and believe me, with great truth," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD SUNDERLAND.

[Has written to the king on the business of sir John Houblon—Receives an equivocal answer relative to the convocation of a new parliament.]

"*Whitehall, Aug.* 17-27, 1695.—My lord; Upon Wednesday last I received an answer to the letter I wrote beyond sea, by the direction of your lordship and my lord keeper. The person* says he will return as soon as ever his occasions will permit, and has consented to what was proposed concerning sir John Houblon; but, as to the empowering us to give assurances that the main question† will be determined, as we wished, and as we hoped we might take it for granted was his intention, and to prepare accordingly for it, he says not one word, which I confess puts me in great pain, lest his mind is altered, and he waives the owning it till his arrival. Upon this jealousy, I have taken the liberty to write by the last post, and represented the consequence it is

* The king.

† The dissolution of the parliament,—see the correspondence with the king at the same period.

of, that it should be known to his friends, that they may prepare to serve him.*

"I give your lordship this account, knowing that since you wish the same that I do, a line from you will have more weight than from any other body; and am," &c.

LORD SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Has written to the king, on the intended dissolution of parliament, and expects his acquiescence.]

"*Althorp, Aug. 24-Sept. 3*, 1695.—My lord; I beg your pardon for not answering your letter of the 17th till now. I intended it last post, but had so great a head-ach I could not see. I have writ into Flanders, as you desired. I can give no account why that person† did not explain himself more, but I am positively sure he is of our mind in the main; for he ordered him‡ who often writes for him, to let me know he was of our opinion in both those things we writ about, as we agreed to do. I take it so much for granted, that I talk and act accordingly."

LORD SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Proffers his services with the king—Wishes for a firm union among the whigs.]

"*Althorp, Sept.* 8-18, 1695.—My lord; I hope you do not doubt but that I will do all the service I can. I intend to be at London about three weeks hence, and sooner, if the king returns before that time. I think the great point is, to keep our friends as much united as is possible. If that could be more than has yet been, it would make every thing else very easy."

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Agrees with his grace in disapproving the dissolution of parliament before the king's return—Observations on the subject.]

"*Sept.* 11-21, 1695.—My lord; My servant overtook me this

* See the letter to the king, page 101.
† The king. ‡ Lord Portland

afternoon, with your lordship's letter. The objections suggested in it are sufficient to prevail with any one, against pretending to issue out writs till the king comes. Those who have a mind to make difficulties have not been wanting, to say the present parliament is dissolved by the queen's death; and therefore we ought to be the more careful, not to furnish them with pretences to cavil at the next. I must own I am not convinced that there is any great reason for the doubt, because the writs are in the king's name; but, however it be in point of law, yet, in prudence, so great an instance of regal power should never be put in practice, but by the king, unless in case of extreme necessity. Were his circumstances such, that he could not be here, till after the meeting of the parliament, there might be an act made to declare that it ought to continue, though he should return, as was done in Henry the Fifth's time. But here will be no time, in a manner, gained, nor any fruit arise from sending out the writs, unless to make the lords justices liable to all the disorders, which may happen at elections, and during the fermentation which attends contests of that nature.

"Your grace sees I wholly agree with you in opinion, so that I hope, since I am advanced on my journey, this occasion will not make it necessary I should return before Monday, which was the day I proposed to myself. If your grace goes out of town before that time, I hope you will do me the honour to let me find a line or two of your's at Powis House, telling me what is fit for me to know, and directing me what I ought to do in your absence.

"I was told this morning that all our endeavours in the city are like to come to nothing. I am in some pain about it, and wish the business of the sheriffs well over.

"Forgive my impertinence, if I return to the business of the parliament, so far as to say, that I am apt to think the king may be willing to avoid being solicited to take care of elections, and to that end, proposes the writs may go before his return. If your grace thinks it fit to mention my opinion to-morrow, I hope you will mention no reasons but your own, which will be the right ones, and forgive me for pretending to offer at any."

The ensuing letter from the duke of Shrewsbury to lord Somers, alludes to an inquiry, which had taken place the preceding session, in consequence of a charge advanced against the duke of Leeds, president of the council, and several other persons of consequence, who were accused of receiving large bribes from the members of the old East India company, to prevent the establishment of a new company, which was then in agitation. It created great warmth and animosity in the House of Commons, and the scrutiny was terminated only by the prorogation and dissolution of the parliament. The embarrassment, of which it was so fertile a source, may be estimated by the anxiety of the minister to prevent its revival :—

"*Welbeck, Oct.* 31-*Nov.* 10, 1695.—My lord; I have left the commission your lordship sent, to make Mr. Recorder a welsh judge, in his majesty's closet, which he says he will sign to-night; which, if he does, it will be returned you by this post.

"The king spoke to me this evening above half an hour, upon the business of the East India company, and the apprehension that that examination, which occasioned so many heats, and took up so much time, at the end of the last session, should be again revived, and disturb his affairs in this. He said he had done a hardship to my lord president,* in hindering him coming to council, which he could not easily persuade himself to do; and had, in a manner, commanded the master of the Rolls not to come into the House of Commons, on purpose to prevent the inconvenience the reviving that matter would occasion; that he hoped we would do all we could amongst our friends to the same end. I confess I am so much of the king's mind, that I think, if that be begun at the opening of the parliament, the session will not be long enough to go through that one examination alone; therefore, I think it were better looking forward, and doing something, if possible, to prevent the like corruption for the future. In order to which, the king himself has proposed the same expedient

* Duke of Leeds.

which I formerly mentioned to your lordship, of having a bill prepared, to be offered at the beginning of this parliament, against all sorts of bribery and corruption; and the end of his majesty's discourse to me this evening, was a command to write to your lordship; that you, either with Mr. Attorney, or who else you think proper, would prepare some bill to that effect."

LORD SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Remarks on the propriety of introducing a bill to prevent the resumption of parliamentary inquiries—Recommends Locke as a candidate for the mastership of the Mint, which was intended for Newton—Hopes that admiral Russell will stand for Middlesex.]

"*Nov.* 4-14, 1695.—My lord; I cannot but agree in opinion with your grace, that the beginning this parliament with the same inquiries with which the last ended, must, in all probability, spoil the session; but if this be to be prevented, it is the king himself who must enter into it; otherwise, it cannot be brought to pass; at least, not without one's exposing himself, and that upon a prospect of no great success. However, I will endeavour to prepare something suitable to the king's pleasure, as to a preventing bill; but when the matter comes to be considered particularly, it will appear difficult enough.

"I acknowledge the favour of returning to me the bill signed for the recorder.

"I am this day desired by Mr. Locke to commend him to your grace's favour, that he may be comptroller of the Mint. I need say nothing of his character, which is not unknown to you. I did also deal so clearly with him, as to tell him that Mr. Newton had been recommended as proper for that place. He owned he had nothing to say against his worth, and spoke very modestly (as he does always in what relates to himself); but I found him still very desirous that his name might be mentioned to your grace.*

* Soon after this period Mr. Locke was appointed a commissioner of trade and plantations.

"As to the Middlesex election, it remains just as it did. We have heard nothing since the first letter from Mr. Russell, but that he was seen off Portland; and, if he should decline to own the standing, I fear many of his friends will be out of humour with him; but of this he may be the judge; nor will I pretend to say how far it may be fit for your grace to give any opinion to him, though nothing can hinder people from saying, that you were willing to encourage it at the beginning, amongst other of his friends.

"I cannot but wish the king here, because I think he will find there is too little time for him to dispatch the consideration of what must necessarily be done before the parliament."

CHAPTER 2.

1696.

Accusations of sir John Fenwick against the duke of Shrewsbury and others—Preparations for his trial—Indisposition of the duke of Shrewsbury, and his retirement into the country—Proceedings on the bill of attainder in the House of Commons—Account of Smith the informer, and his accusations—Correspondence on the subject, and on the transactions in parliament, from July to November, 1696.

THE letters of this year are particularly valuable, from the development which they afford of the mysterious accusations made by sir John Fenwick; accusations implicating the character and affecting the feelings of the duke of Shrewsbury.

In the correspondence with the king, we have adverted to the communication which Fenwick delivered to the duke of Devonshire, and to the impression made by that disclosure.* But notwithstanding the contempt with which it was treated, various rumours were in circulation, and different persons indicated, as included in the charge. In fact, a general alarm prevailed; and many, who had imprudently engaged in the slightest intercourse with the court of St. Germain's, or its agents, appeared to consider themselves as objects of suspicion.

Two circumstances contributed to increase the public anxiety. The first was, a new examination of Fenwick, by Mr. Vernon, under the authority of the lords justices, on the 23rd of September; and the second the consequent order for the suspension of his trial. The new confession made by the prisoner in this examination, contained, however, only a slight and cautious reference to his former paper; and comprised merely a vague and confused account of the various machinations in which he had himself been

* See Page 144.

engaged, with lord Aylesbury, sir James Montgomery, and other notorious Jacobites.*

Meanwhile, the first and essential charge, which had been confided to the duke of Devonshire, was veiled in the most profound secrecy; for Shrewsbury was unacquainted with its contents, till imparted in the letter from the king, of the 10th of September, above a month after the confession of Fenwick had been transmitted to the Hague. Admiral Russell remained in equal ignorance, till the return of the king from the continent, when he received the information in a private audience; and even Mr. Vernon, though employed to take the second examination, was unapprised of the subject of the first, till the 12th of October, when he appears to have received a hint of its nature from his noble patron.†

This mysterious reserve arose from the embarrassment felt by the king and his confidential servants, in regard to the course which it was proper to pursue. It was found impossible to smother the accusation; and yet, in appearing to deem it worthy of serious attention, they were apprehensive of giving it too much weight in public opinion. To add to their perplexity, the accident which befel Shrewsbury detained him in the country; and prevented him, who was not only the principal minister of the crown, but the chief party concerned, from giving his personal advice and assistance.

After much hesitation, the recommendation of the noble secretary induced the king to examine Fenwick in person. It was hoped that the opinion of the sovereign would satisfy the parliament and nation, without a public scrutiny; and that the prisoner might then be left to the ordinary course of justice. But, as we have already observed, this plan was frustrated at the moment of its adoption, by the escape of Goodman; and the examination of Fenwick, by the king himself, elicited no farther explanation of the charges.

* The copy of this examination is printed in the Journals of the House of Commons, Nov. 6, 1696.

† Mr. Vernon's letters in September and October, 1696.

As the sole proof of treason now rested on the single evidence of captain Porter, who appears to have been employed as a spy, no alternative remained but to proceed against Fenwick by a bill of attainder; and, consequently, to incur the risk of submitting his communications to the scrutiny of both houses. Accordingly, this important proceeding was opened in the Commons, on the 6th of November. Admiral Russell then acquainted the House that sir John Fenwick, in his examinations, had named him and several other persons of quality, as concerned in designs against the government; and that his majesty had given leave to lay that information before them. He, therefore, moved that these papers might be read, in order to afford him an opportunity of justifying his character. His request being granted, he entered into a full and satisfactory vindication of himself and the duke of Shrewsbury; and was followed by other members, who spoke, either in their own behalf, or in defence of their friends. Fenwick was afterwards examined in person, but his replies evinced such prevarication, that no hesitation appears to have occurred, in passing a vote of censure on his charges. The house, therefore, unanimously resolved, "That the papers read as sir John Fenwick's information, reflecting on the fidelity of several noble persons, divers members of this House, and others, only by hearsay, are false and scandalous, and a contrivance to undermine the government, and create jealousies between the king and his subjects, in order to stifle the real conspiracy.*

A motion was next made to bring in a bill of attainder, which, after a warm debate, was carried by 169 against 61; and an order was passed to allow the prisoner the advice and assistance of counsel. It was read first on the 9th of November, and secondly, on the 13th, in the presence of the prisoner, who was permitted to enter on his defence. The principle of the measure, and the evidence on which it rested, underwent the strictest scrutiny; and in the course of the debates, different friends of the noble persons who were accused, made attempts to ascertain

* Journals of the House of Commons, Nov. 6, 1696.

the grounds of accusation. Among them were Mr. Vernon and Mr. Brydges, who demanded of sir John, "what proof he had that the duke of Shrewsbury was in treaty with king James, before he went out of office; and what that he returned to office by the operation and consent of that king." These questions, and many others tending to a similar purpose, were repeatedly evaded by the prisoner, under the frivolous pretence, that his replies might turn to his own prejudice. Such continued prevarication essentially contributed to injure his cause.

The bill, however, was not only strenuously resisted on party motives, but occasioned a considerable diversity of opinion, even among the adherents of the court and the friends of government. At length, on the 25th of November, it was read a third time; and, after an opposition unusually vigorous and persevering, was carried by a majority of thirty-three, or 189 votes against 156.*

In the midst of the perplexity arising from Fenwick's trial, the duke of Shrewsbury was exposed to a new embarrassment, which is frequently alluded to in the succeeding letters. Among the numerous tribe of informers, who at that period endeavoured to work on the fears and curiosity of the government, was one Matthew Smith, nephew to sir W. Perkins, who had been captain of an independent company at Windsor, and afterwards held a commission in the regiment of the duke of Norfolk. On his dismission from the service, he associated with the Jacobites; and appears to have been admitted to some of their secret councils. Affecting disgust, however, at their violence, and horror at their plots for the assassination of the king, he addressed himself to the duke of Shrewsbury, through the under secretary, Mr. Vernon, giving vague hints, and doubtful accusations, and promising more specific information. But as his disclosures were confused in themselves, and always coupled with importunate demands for money, and with the condition that he should not be

* Trial of sir John Fenwick.—Debates of the Commons—Tindal and the other english historians.—Hansard's State Trials, vol. 13, p. 538.—Vernon's letters to the duke of Shrewsbury, from October, 1696.

adduced as a witness, the noble secretary, after occasionally rewarding him with pecuniary supplies, and communicating his intimations to the king, gradually disregarded his advices, though the informer succeeded in entangling him in a correspondence.

In resentment for this neglect, Smith next applied to lord Monmouth, whom he persuaded that he had given the duke of Shrewsbury important information relative to the machinations of the Jacobites, and even to the assassination plot. In evidence of this assertion he produced copies of his letters, which, after the conspiracy had exploded, bore the appearance of an important and authentic disclosure. He not only complained that his zeal was discouraged by the duke of Shrewsbury, but even adduced his grace's temporary absence in the country, from indisposition, two days previous to the intended execution of the plot, as a proof of his secret connivance in the designs of the conspirators. Monmouth imparted these communications to the king; and his information made such an impression, that Smith obtained the notice of lord Portland. His disclosures were again submitted to the duke of Shrewsbury, the lord keeper Somers, and other members of the cabinet; and, with their concurrence, he was supplied with occasional sums of money. He was even privately introduced to the king; but no farther advantage could be drawn from his discoveries, though he assumed great merit from the notice he had attracted; and absurdly boasted that he should receive 6,000*l.*, and be raised to the dignity of an earl.

These communications happened in the early part of 1696; and, as the king was on the point of repairing to the continent, no farther notice was taken of the informer; but his letters were sealed up, and left in the custody of sir William Trumbull, secretary of state.

In this situation the affair rested, till the disclosure of Fenwick roused the public attention. Of this incident Smith availed himself; and endeavoured to extort new contributions, by renewing his insinuations against the duke of Shrewsbury, at a time when he laboured under public suspicion. The informer again found Monmouth too ready to aid his designs, and there was

great reason to fear that his information would be brought to the notice of parliament, while the affair of Fenwick was pending. From the correspondence it appears that various attempts were made to check the malicious zeal of Monmouth, but in vain; for, at the final examination of Fenwick, such reference was made to the communications of Smith, that he was called before the House of Lords, and underwent a strict examination.* At their request also, the noble secretary gave a full account of his intercourse with this spy, in a letter addressed to the lord.keeper, which will be found in the correspondence. This scrutiny, however, developed the real character of Smith, and he was treated by the House, as a mercenary informer, whose views were iniquitous, and whose object was gain.†

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Declines his invitation to repair to London—Declares that he is without influence.]

"*Althorp, July* 19-29, 1696.—My lord; If I could be of any use to the public, or my friends, I would certainly have been at London before this time; but, thinking as I do, and as you know I have done a great while, that I am entirely insignificant, this is the best place for me. Men are so unwilling to be thought good for nothing, that when they say it themselves they may be believed; and I suppose they are. But whatever I am to the rest of the world, either here or any where else, you may absolutely dispose of me for your service, if I could be so happy as to be capable of doing you any; for I am, with all possible truth," &c.

REPLY OF THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Complains of the embarrassed state of public affairs—Claims his assistance.]

"*Whitehall, July* 21-31, 1696.—My lord; It being decreed that nobody shall be infallible, your lordship, in your opinion of your-

* See the abstract of the three papers delivered by the lady Mary Fenwick, in the ensuing chapter, note to letter from lord Somers, December 24.

† For a farther account of Smith, see note to letter of June 20, 1696-7, at the close of chapter 3.

self, has committed an error, that is more commendable than if you had judged right; but if it be excusable to think worse of yourself than you deserve, pray do not believe so ill of your friends, as that they are disposed to join with you in your mistake. I am sure I am one who shall always be glad of your assistance; and I think there never was a time in which help was more wanted. The particulars are too many for a letter, or rather so melancholy that I cannot endure to relate them; I shall, therefore, conclude with a wish, that every body that desires to be in business were in it, and fit for it; and that those were excused who hate it, for they can never be so proper as if they loved it. If this prayer of mine were granted, you, perhaps, would remain at Althorp; and you might; for there would not want some of our acquaintance sufficiently to supply all stations."

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the imprudent conduct of lord Monmouth—Sir J. Fenwick's trial deferred.]

"*Sept.* 24-*Oct.* 4, 1696.—My lord; The person* who was to dine with me this day, has, as I find, entered into a foolish business, beyond what I could have thought. I have had much discourse with him, and I think he is resolved to stir no more, at least till he shall discourse with your grace; to which end he will wait upon you, when you come to town.

"Mr. Vernon will acquaint your grace that sir John Fenwick's trial is put off till the king's coming; which, I am apt to think, upon the whole matter, is the least exceptionable way."

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Considerations on sir John Fenwick's affair—Perplexed how to act—Necessity of his grace's return to London—Recommends the impeachment of lord Aylesbury, as the means of stopping inquiries into the plot.]

"*Oct.* 15-25, 1696.—My lord; There is no one living who does more lament the mischance which befel you, or more heartily

* Lord Monmouth.

wish your perfect recovery from all the ill consequences of it than I do. Nothing could have fallen out more unlucky for the king and for us all at this time; nay, give me leave to say, it is very unfortunate for yourself. I have been so ill myself, that I could not wait upon the king till yesterday; and I was very glad he did not enter into any particulars with me, in relation to sir John Fenwick, for I should not have known what to have said to him, because I was ignorant what your grace's sentiments were, as to the method which ought to be taken.

"I persuade myself your grace has no doubt but that I would sincerely and heartily act in this matter, as should be most agreeable to you, and best for your service; but the circumstances of this matter are such, that what is ever so well intended may have an ill event; and, therefore, without some light from you, I dare not make a step in it. My lord Portland has been with me this afternoon, and has said a great deal to me of the discourses of the town, and would have taken it for granted, that I knew the contents of the paper,* and have talked to me upon it; but I prevented him as to that, by disowning it, and chose to take the other way of discoursing the matter, upon what my lady Mary has published to several people. I do own my thoughts were, that the king should hear sir John Fenwick, and that one or two persons should be by: that he should freely tell him his mind of the pretended confessions; that it was a malicious contrivance, by hearsays, to create jealousies of those who were the truest in his interest; and a shuffling account of the plots of his enemies, by concealing the late transactions, and the most considerable persons of those who were concerned, and only telling old stories before the act of grace; and then direct him to be examined anew in his presence.

"This matter I did only hint to my lord very lightly, and he said the king was of opinion, that to send for sir John Fenwick was to give weight to what he said. Whether that notion be right or not I will leave to your consideration. But I think the

*The paper delivered by sir John Fenwick to the duke of Devonshire.

other way (if, in the conclusion of the examination, the king woul dgive direction, or rather consent, that my lord Aylesbury * should be impeached) would be the most likely way of diverting the parliament from troubling themselves with entering any farther into the inquiry after the plot. I confess there may be much of accident in this way; but if nothing be done before the session, in relation to sir John Fenwick, I do not see but the examination of the whole plot will come into parliament, unavoidably, and confound the whole business.

"After all this confused talk (for I write in as much hurry as it is possible) I beg of your grace, that you would come to town as soon as your health will possibly allow. Give me leave to say, I hope you will not unnecessarily delay one hour. I am confident, were you here, it would be easy to give the right turn to this business, which I fear will not otherwise be possible. If this cannot be so soon as I wish, let me but receive any intimation of your thoughts, and how I should act, and you may be assured I will proceed accordingly, with more concern and tenderness than if the case were my own. I am sensible what uneasiness it is to your grace, to be talked of upon such a subject, thoug hit be but talk, and must vanish whenever it comes to be looked into. I think your appearing in town will go a great way towards putting an end to it; and therefore you may judge how heartily upon this, as well as all other accounts, I pray for your being recovered and returned to London.

* Thomas Bruce, second earl of Aylesbury, after signing the declaration of support to the prince of Orange, returned to the interest of king James, from an aversion to concur in the breach of the hereditary line of descent. He, consequently, abstained from taking the oath of allegiance to king William and queen Mary, and was soon implicated in the intrigues of the Jacobites. Being suspected of a participation in the plot, for which sir John Fenwick suffered, he was taken into custody in February, 1696. The whigs were anxious to bring him to trial, but the king, ever lenient to those who had been his supporters, in the early period of the Revolution, would not consent. Accordingly, he was liberated, on bail, in February, 1697; and, by permission, retired to Brussels, where he established his residence. He died there, in 1741, at the age of 88; and, as he had not been attainted, his title and honours devolved on his son Charles, who was one of the twelve peers created by queen Anne in 1711, under the title of lord Bruce of Whorlton.

"Good my lord, forgive me for writing in this confused manner, I cannot stay to read over what I have writ, my lord Sunderland and some of the Treasury being impatiently waiting all this while; and whatever is wrong be pleased to ascribe to my over much zeal, and pardon that and all other faults in, my lord," &c.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Is much concerned at his accident—Mysterious hint relative to sir John Fenwick's affair.]

"*London, Oct.* 15-25, 1696.—My lord; Though I have not troubled you with letters, I am sure no man, without excepting any, is so much concerned at the unlucky accident that has happened to you as I am, both on a public and a private account. We do not know how to move without you; and for that reason, and for the assistance you may have, so much better here than in the country, I hope you will come hither as soon as you can, without danger.

"The king is gone to Windsor, and at his return, which will be to-morrow, he has ordered my lord keeper, Mr. Russell, and myself to attend him, to acquaint Mr. Russell with what he did you,* and to advise what way is best to treat that matter, which he will do just as your friends like best. Nobody knows any thing of it yet, but my lord keeper and myself, and those first acquainted with it; so that the person† I told you a wonderful story of, thinks himself principally concerned. I wish it might continue so, if it were possible, which, in my opinion, it is. If you have any thoughts of this, or any thing else that I can further, I will believe you will let me know them, being, with the greatest sincerity imaginable," &c.

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Anxious for his return to town—Deprecates his resignation of the seals, as impolitic and injurious to his honour—On the conduct of lord Monmouth.]

"*Oct.* 19-29, 1696.—My lord; I am much troubled at the ill

* The communication of sir John Fenwick. † Lord Monmouth.

success of your attempt to get to this town, and I do most heartily wish, that none of the ill consequences of it may continue upon you. I cannot but think your being here would have contributed to the speedy recovery of your health, as I am sure it would to the putting an end to that matter, which gives you an uneasiness, as well as it must do to every one, who has a true honour for you, as I have. You cannot oblige me more than in seeming to believe it; and I could wish the knowledge you have had of my little capacity in judging did not make it much more hard for you to give credit to my opinion, than to judge favorably of my meaning; for I never was more concerned in my life than I am now, to convince you, that you are infinitely in the wrong, in entertaining any thoughts of delivering up the seals at this time.

"I will not at present enter into the dispute of what may be proper hereafter, but I will positively affirm, that all the enemies you have in the world cannot stain your honour so much as such an action would. The world could say nothing else but, either that a consciousness of guilt made you do it, or else, that the king believed the accusation, and called for the seals. Forgive me for speaking after this free manner, for I do own I can scarce be temperate in this matter. There can no possible good come of your quitting: it will not stop the coming of the business into parliament, but will make it infinitely worse there, than it can be upon the foot it is. It will increase the discourse of it abroad. It will bring a real prejudice upon Mr. Russell. It will take away from your friends the possibility of giving a right turn to this affair, which I do not despair may be done, with a good deal of ease, if your grace, after you have heard Mr. Vernon tell you* all that has been discoursed of among us, would let him be so far informed, as that he might suggest to us what has occurred to you, as proper to be done, when it comes to be started in parliament, if that must be.

"I have not pretended to use any arguments at present, with

* Mr. Vernon was sent to Eyford to communicate personally with the duke of Shrewsbury on this perplexing affair.

relation to the public (which would suffer inexpressibly if you should lay down in this manner), because I am so very full of the thoughts of what relates to yourself; and though I have expressed myself very confusedly, yet, if your grace from thence will infer with how passionate a concern I write, it is as much as I pretend to. I am," &c.

" P. S. Though Mr. Vernon stays for my letter in some haste, yet I will add a word about my lord Monmouth. The report of his being named by sir John Fenwick, transported him again to great extravagancies in talk; but after some days treating with him, he came to a positive promise to say no more of the matter, till he had first discoursed with your grace; and I think he is sensible of what a ridiculous and dishonourable part he would be acting, if he should do any thing he has been talking of."

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Disapproves his intended resignation.]

" *London, Oct.* 19-29, 1696.—My lord; I think I need not tell you, that I am infinitely concerned at your being so unable to bear the journey your friends desired you to make; and, therefore, I will leave all that, and take the liberty to differ with you in every thing you say about giving up the seals. If it were allowed you could not serve the king, after the reflections which you think will be made, yet it would give your enemies great advantage against you to quit now. But I am far from thinking any reflections can be made that you ought to mind, and that this will have a very contrary effect to what was intended; and I think it impossible to imagine any advantage to you, to deliver up the seals before you see the king. This is the opinion of the king, of my lord keeper, of my lord Portland, and of Mr. Russell, for which there are a hundred arguments. Many of them I have made use of to Mr. Vernon, though I believe they will be unnecessary; for, upon second thoughts, I conclude it impossible you should differ from so many of your friends, in a matter that appears so plain to them."

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Wishes him to soothe lord Monmouth—Consultations on the mode of bringing Fenwick's discovery before parliament.]

"*Oct.* 27-*Nov.* 6, 1696.—My lord; At present my lord Monmouth seems very unreasonable; but if your grace would take occasion to mention, in general terms, that one of the uneasinesses your confinement brings upon you, is the delay which it gives to your meeting with him, I believe it would be very proper; and if something of that nature were written, as to me, among other things, I would take care to shew it to him immediately.

"My lord Sunderland, lord Wharton, lord Edward Russell, Mr. Montague, Mr. Felton, and myself, met last night. Mr. Russell was not there; the news of his brother's death obliging him not to go abroad.

"Our discourse was upon the subject of sir John Fenwick's pretended discovery, and though I cannot say any thing was resolved upon, yet we considered the hints your grace was pleased to suggest, in Mr. Vernon's paper, and what else occurred to any of us, for the present; but the particulars being new to some of the persons, we agreed to meet again to-morrow, upon the same occasion, and, in the mean time, every one was to form his thoughts as well as he could. Two things were principally talked of: the time, and the manner, of this thing's coming into parliament; for it was taken for granted that it could not be kept out, and that the endeavouring it would do mischief.

"As to the time, we were generally of opinion, that if it were too long delayed, we had reason to fear our being prevented in directing the manner of its coming in, or the governing it there. As to the manner, though we all wished it might come in from the king, because of the turn he might give it, yet we thought there would be a difficulty in what manner he could do it; for, if he slighted it, as he ought, perhaps it would be hard to answer the question, why he brought it to the House; and, if otherwise, it would give a weight to it.

"This is the principal matter under our consideration. I would

suggest to your grace, whether such a course as this would do well; that Mr. Russell should speak of it in the House, and should declare the king's goodness, in being satisfied entirely of the falsehood and malice of sir John Fenwick; but yet, for his own vindication, desired that the House would take notice of the thing; and that, thereupon, some other privy counsellors should be authorised to acquaint them with the king's sentiments; but yet, at the same time, declaring themselves willing to have it come into the House. My meaning is, that what Mr. Russell says for himself, either he, or somebody else, should be empowered to say in your grace's name.

"I could wish we had your grace's own thoughts of the way of its coming in, and I should be glad this point were settled, that we might be at liberty of talking with some of the best intentioned and most sensible of our friends, in general terms, of the matter, that so they might not be surprised too much, nor think themselves too much neglected.

"My lord Sunderland is engaged again in the old business of removing my lord G——,* which he told Mr. Wh*** and me was now wholly intended for your grace's service. You will make the best reflections on this matter yourself. Perhaps at this time it may not be inconvenient as to your part, and Mr. Russell's, in sir John Fenwick's paper, that the king makes such a distinction.

"I do most sincerely and passionately desire your grace's perfect recovery, and presence amongst us, and am, with all my whole heart," &c.

"P. S. I have written in such haste, that I fear you cannot read the paper, or guess at the meaning."

LORD WHARTON TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the same subject.]

"*Whitehall, Oct. 27-Nov. 6, 1696.*— * * * * There is a good deal of impatience in a great many honest gentlemen of the House

* Godolphin, first lord commissioner of the Treasury.

(of Commons) to be getting at this matter of the plot; and it is not very hard to perceive who* it is they imagine (I may say hope) they shall have some opportunity of attacking, by inquiring into it; so that I cannot, for my part, see any thing in this matter so difficult as to be able to give that turn that is necessary, in the distinguishing those, that every honest man will be ready to think well of, from those that they may, perhaps, have another opinion of. My lord steward's being out of town (to whom it is known this discovery was only made) doth, I believe, satisfy gentlemen that it is not so proper to stir this matter till he comes up. I fancy he is so confounded with the part he hath acted, that he will bury himself in Devonshire."

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Intended proceedings on the accusation of sir John Fenwick—Solicits him to return to town.]

"*October 29-Nov.* 8, 1696.—I avoided giving your grace the trouble of a letter, since Mr. Vernon was to be with you, and could tell you, not only my poor thoughts, but those of your friends, that had been consulted relating to the affair last night. All people concurred in your notion in having the king tell the council his sentiments of it; and this night more are to meet, to resolve, finally, how it shall be managed, when brought into the Commons House, of which lord Wharton will give you a full account. He tells me so, as which makes me close this paper before we meet. But for many reasons, if your health will permit it, your being in town would be of great service to yourself as a friend. It is resolved, Thursday next, the king shall open the business to the council, and the next day I am to take notice of it to the House. It is not doubted but the paper will meet with the usage it deserves. But, before I conclude, let me tell you once again, if with safety you can come to town, it is the opinion of all your friends and servants you should attempt it. I hope it is needless to assure you, that no friend, servant, or relation you have in the world, is more faithfully your's," &c.

* Alluding probably to lord Godolphin.

LORD WHARTON TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the same subject.]

"*Whitehall, Oct.* 29-*Nov.* 8, 1696.—Mr. Russell tells me that he hath this evening writ to your grace, just before he went to my lord keeper's, from whence I am just come; there met there (besides the gentlemen I named to you in my last) Mr. Boscawen, Mr. Smith, sir Thomas Littleton, the attorney-general,* Mr. Clark, and Mr. Russell himself. The methods I wrote your grace word of, in my last, seemed last night to be liked, and resolved on by the persons I first named; but when the whole matter was opened to-night, those gentlemen to whom it was new, seemed to foresee a great many difficulties in the methods proposed. It is much doubted by them, whether information of this kind, being once laid before the House of Commons, may not probably run into such a length of examinations and debates, as may be very uneasy for your grace and Mr. Russell to submit to; and, in short, are parted this night, without coming to any resolution what methods to proceed in, or what the consequences may be of those that were proposed. On Saturday, in the afternoon, they will be all desired to meet again. Your grace will consider your health above any thing, but as soon as that will give you leave, I would beg that you would come up, which is all the post will give me leave to say."

LORD WHARTON TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the same subject.]

"*Whitehall, Oct.* 31-*Nov.* 10, 1696.—**** It was with a good deal of uneasiness to myself, that I could give your grace no better account by last post of any resolutions taken that evening. The matter that was considered of being new, and of the greatest consequence, it was not much to be wondered at that gentlemen were not quick to give their opinions, or to come to any resolu-

* Sir Thomas Trevor.

tions; but there were others, besides myself, who were not without some apprehensions, that there might be some other reason given for it; and that some of the members of the House of Commons, having no very great acquaintance, or perhaps not an entire confidence in a certain nobleman* they might, for that reason, not speak their minds so freely, as otherwise they would have done. It was, therefore, resolved upon yesterday, that before we should meet this afternoon, at my lord keeper's (as was resolved on Thursday night), we might have an opportunity of discoursing with a little more freedom together; and, accordingly, there met at Mr. Russell's, this morning, all the gentlemen that had been at my lord keeper's before, except lord Sunderland and Mr. Felton."

He then proceeds to state the resolutions adopted, which will be more fully detailed in the next letter from lord Somers, and continues:—

"This afternoon the gentlemen that had been together in the morning came all to my lord keeper's, where were also lord Sunderland, Mr. Felton, Mr. Palmes, and Mr. Chadwick. What had been thought of in the morning was broke by degrees, and my lord Sunderland gave in to every part of it as readily as could be imagined; and did as good as say, that he did not doubt but the king would do in every thing as was desired.

"My lord steward is not yet come to town, but is expected before the birth-day; and I am not sorry he will not be there on Monday; though it may very well be said that the king deferred this examination hitherto for his coming up; but it could not be put off any longer, the business of the supply coming on in the House of Commons on Tuesday, and the state of the nation on Wednesday, which may, probably enough, lead into debates, that may tend to this matter."

* * * * *

* Lord Sunderland.

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Farther deliberations on Fenwick's affair—Resignation of lord Godolphin.]

"*Oct.* 31-*Nov.* 10, 1696.—My lord; This morning some of your grace's servants met at Mr. Russell's, and a greater number at my house this afternoon. We have had the paper read amongst us, and I think we are come to make a right judgment of it, that though your grace and Mr. Russell are named, yet the charge is upon the whole body of the whigs; and that the sole managing of king James's business has been in their hands, ever since my lord Middleton's going over, even the assassination itself. When men are thus persuaded, that the party is involved in the accusation, it may be easily believed, that no part which touches their friends will have the least credit.

"The opinion which they have all fallen into at present is, that the king should have sir John Fenwick brought to him; and should be pleased to tell him his sense of the pretended confession; but that, if he was willing to be ingenuous, and without reserve, to tell things of his own knowledge, to let him know he would have his examination taken instantly in his presence. That when this was done, the king should inform the council of what was said, together with his sense of it; and afterwards, at Mr. Russell's request, to allow him to take notice of it in the House of Commons. And the gentlemen who were present have all declared themselves resolved then to use their utmost endeavours to get the whole treated as it ought to be, and to press for a vote, to address to the king, that the trial may proceed.

"It was concluded that, as the matter now stands, this examination was unavoidable; for, sir John Fenwick having pretended to reserve things for the king's particular knowledge, if the king would not hear them, it was impossible to think otherwise but that the House would do it. It is to be hoped if the king approves of this method, and he be sent for on the sudden, and be made sensible that his design is seen through, his heart may fail him, and the truth may come out, even whose contriv-

ance his paper was. However, in such an unhappy perplexed matter somewhat must be done, and this is the only method which we could unite in; and this shall be managed with the best caution we can use.

"I will trouble your grace with no more particulars, but apply myself only to beg you to come to town, which is what I now think so necessary, that nothing but a direct impossibility of coming can excuse your stay: for, my lord Godolphin having quitted his employment this day, and retired to Windsor, the world will not fail to make ill constructions, if your grace should not appear among us quickly. And, since the king is willing to make so remarkable a distinction between you and Mr. Russell, and my lord who is gone out, I think you should not let any thing on your part give people occasion to imagine, that the cases are alike.

"Give me leave to say, that, in my opinion, my lord Godolphin is directly tricked in this matter, and has suffered himself to be cozened into an offer to lay down, and is surprised in having his offer accepted; and, I have reason to think, sees it and repents of it.

"My lord, let me once more beg you to venture (as soon as your health will bear it) to begin your journey. Every one, who wishes you well, does impatiently desire your coming."

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Fenwick appears before the king—His equivocating conduct—Considerations on the mode of submitting the question to parliament.]

"*Nov.* 3-13, 1696.—My lord; I remember very well it was your grace's opinion, that the king should speak with sir John Fenwick; and it was mine so much, that I proposed and pressed it from the beginning, because, without that was done, I always thought it was impossible to keep the House from entering into an examination of him. I am now to tell your grace what passed last night. The persons who waited upon the king were, the archbishop, lord privy seal, lord chamberlain, lord Portland, the two chief justices, the attorney and solicitor. I did previously

acquaint my lord chamberlain and my lord chief justice Treby, and also discoursed it in part with Mr. Secretary, to whom I believe it was not new. Sir John Fenwick was brought away on a sudden, and is since kept close.

"The king told him he had received a paper from my lord steward's hands, and had, since that, seen another, which he gave in to the lords justices; that he was wholly dissatisfied with both, in respect as well to the matter as the manner. That the first, instead of discovering his accomplices, was a general, uncertain, and useless account of persons who were strangers to him, and only hearsays said of them, without an account of time, or place, or authors, and seemed only a contrivance to beget suspicions of those, who were nearest to him, and of whom, for very good reasons, he had the most assured confidence. That the other was trifling, and related to things before the act of grace, or to such as were charged before two witnesses; so he was directed, without regard to his papers, to give an entire and natural account of his whole knowledge. He said he knew nothing but what was in his papers, and desired time till my lord steward came to town, insisting that he was surprised. It was plainly told him that it was intended he should not have time to prepare another paper; that what he knew before, he still knew, and could tell if he would. In short, he refused to say any thing, even so much as to explain, or make certain his papers, or to tell what he reserved for the king, unless it might be allowed to tell it to the king himself. This the king absolutely refused; and also told him, that he would neither hear him, nor hear from him again; and so he was sent away. To-morrow morning the several persons who met before, at my house, are agreed to meet again, in order to propose what is proper to be done next.

"I think (at present) it would be fit for the king to give an account of this at council, and to declare his opinion of the maliciousness of the contrivance; and then, if Mr. Russell, and any one upon your grace's account ask leave, that upon occasion they may make mention of this matter, that the king would be

pleased to allow of it. But this is entirely to be submitted to better opinions.

"I suppose your grace will have heard that Goodman* is gone away, which I take to be a most unhappy thing at this time. We never heard of it, till after it was agreed to send for sir John Fenwick; and I believe, that his knowledge of it, gave sir John Fenwick the more confidence.

"I think all, who were present with the king, have formed to themselves a right notion of the design of the Jacobites, in this pretended discovery, or at least they pretend so. I have, as by your order, acquainted the M. of W———† with as much as was expedient, of this matter, and he desires me to assure your grace of his hearty zealous service. I am altogether for having Mr. Vernon acquaint the Sp——,‡ Mr. H——,‖ and Mr. B——,§ but I think it ought not to be, till after we see what will be agreed upon to-morrow, and then I will take the liberty of speaking with some others, who I hope may be useful.

"I am most sensibly afflicted to read your melancholy account of your health, which I will take no notice of, but will heartily and constantly wish for the re-establishing of it, as that upon which the good of England does very much depend.

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Greatly mortified by Fenwick's accusation, though he thinks all will see its injustice—Considerations on the mode of proceeding—Is himself to lay it before the House of Commons.]

"*Nov. 5, Thursday night*, 11 *o'clock*.—After expressing his satisfaction that his grace was better, he adds:

"Ease and quiet is the best medicine to restore your health. As to the business of Fenwick, I am afraid it gives you more disturbance than will suit with your present distemper, though I cannot wonder at your being concerned at so villanous a design;

* One of the two witnesses against sir John Fenwick.

† Marquis of Winchester. ‡ The Speaker, Mr. Foley.

‖ Mr. Harley. § Mr. Boyle.

and though I am in health and strength, I am so mortified, that I wish for nothing so much, as a fair occasion to quit all, and live quietly while the french king will let us. I conclude these contrivances will be daily practised by the Jacobites, against those persons, who are able and zealous to this government; but, in my poor opinion, that must not be thought on, till after this winter be over, and I hope you do entirely agree with me. This night the king brings it to the council. I suppose Mr. Vernon* has given you an account that the villain was before the king, and what past, therefore I wont trouble you with repeating it; but certainly you are in the right, that the king ought to have seen him the moment he came over. To-morrow I bring it into the House of Commons; what will be the event there I know not, for amongst a number of people, it cannot be doubted but you and myself have enemies; and if we do not meet with a justification from all, it will not, in my opinion, take off the slur thrown upon our reputation, though I think what he says so preposterous, that no man in justice can believe it. What the House will do about the papers cannot be judged, or whether they will examine him at the bar. From what I have learnt of his behaviour, when with the king, it is pretty plain the papers he then gave in are not his own, but put into his hands, for he would say nothing, but referred to his papers. By Friday night I shall be able to give you a more perfect account, whether a farther inquiry is to be made.

"I am this night come from Kensington, where the king has laid the affair before the council. He behaved himself as I could wish, and the lords seemed to hope the paper to be a designed thing, as I cannot doubt every body will that hears it. I have leave to acquaint the House with it to-morrow morning. When I asked that permission I presumed to tell your thoughts as well as my own. The secretary is to acquaint the House, before he delivers the papers, with the king's sense of it.

"Lord steward, out of countenance, made, like himself, a foolish speech, asking your's and my pardon, he had not acquainted

* Mr. Vernon, in his letter of Nov. 3, gives no account of the examination, but refers to the preceding letter of the lord keeper.

us with the matter; but he was under an obligation to tell only the king with it. I returned his compliment from you and myself, as he and his speech deserved. It is now eleven o'clock, and I can say no more."

A letter from Mr. Vernon, which we here subjoin, contains some account of the proceedings in the House of Commons, when admiral Russell vindicated himself and the duke of Shrewsbury from the accusation of sir John Fenwick.

MR. VERNON TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Nov. 6, two in the morning.*—I thank God I can now send your grace the joyful account of this day's success, that has been carried as well according to my expectations as wishes. Your grace and your friends, and some others, for your sakes, are not only honorably acquitted, but sir John Fenwick is likewise to be proceeded against by bill of attainder, and this they have got by conveying away Goodman; and it hath made your grace's justification so much the more remarkable, as the House of Commons have had a proper occasion to shew their resentments against this man.

"I refer your grace to the enclosed copy* of the proceedings, which I likewise send abroad, with some other additions, to all your grace corresponds with beyond sea, and it being late, I reserve myself to acquaint you with some other particulars.

"Mr. Russell opened the matter pretty early in the morning, before the House filled, being necessitated to it, by reason they were going into a committee, according to the order of the day, upon the new bill for the corn; but Mr. Secretary was not then come with the papers, so the House went into that committee; and about an hour after, when the secretary was come, and there was a competent number, Mr. Mordaunt broke up the committee, and the secretary acquainted the House with the orders he had from the king, to lay Fenwick's papers before the House, if they thought fit. He told them the king's sense of them, and the little satisfaction

* This paper is lost.

he received, when he examined Fenwick upon them, and that he looks upon his first paper as intended only to raise distrust, and to embroil his affairs; and he took the occasion to instance it, only in relation to your grace and Mr. Russell. I suppose he spoke then by rule, and was not to say much to raise the House, and I observed he told them, he came lately into the knowledge of any thing that related to sir John, as if the matter would have been mended, if more of it had passed through his hands. The papers were then carried up and read, as well the examination I took, as sir John's paper. Mr. Russell then spoke handsomely and modestly for himself and your grace, and put himself upon the justice of the House, to stand or fall by their opinions. Crawford and Delaval spoke next, and denied the charge laid upon them, or that they had any knowledge of sir John.

"One Mr. Morley, a member, stood up next, who it seems is nephew to Dick Morley, one of the select number. He vindicated the loyalty of himself and father, and since his uncle was guilty of being in conspiracies, for his part he renounced him. Mr. Howe took him up, for being so easy in deserting his relations: he would do well to stay till the matter was proved, for if the papers were false, as to any others named in it, it would not be true with respect to Mr. Morley. Mr. Smith and he fell to words about that, and Howe was very high in his answers, that since he was made a judge of what these papers contained, he had a right to be satisfied, as to the innocence or guilt of those he was to acquit or condemn. Sir Thomas Littleton shewed very well, that there might be a judgment made of what was fit to be believed or not, though spoke by the same man.

"Sir Edward Seymour said, if a man were falsified in one thing, it was but just it should abate his credit as to the rest. The House not appearing to be in any great disposition to go far in that way, my lord Coningsby very dexterously moved, that Fenwick might be sent for, and prevented the others doing it.

"Lord Cutts and Mr. Norris, who have been both zealous in this matter, were ordered to fetch him, with a strong guard. The

gross of what passed afterwards, your grace will please to see under Mr. Rowley's hands.*

"I spoke to Mr. Boyle early this morning, at his lodgings; I spoke to Mr. Harley in the House, who came late; but I might as well have let them both alone; they were very well in their answers to me, but neither of them shewed any thing of it in the debate, perhaps they thought it sufficient to be silent. But, in the bill of attainder, Harley spoke against it, and both of them staid together at that division. The speaker,† I think, did his part, and was ready to frame fit questions. He gives his service to your grace.

"Mr. Boyle would have made some kind of excuse to me, that he saw the business go on cleverly, and nobody said any thing that needed an answer; but Mr. Howe's petulancy might have furnished occasion, if he had thought fit. Sir Joseph Williamson said something, but less than I expected from him.

"Montague, Smith, Littleton, Clark, sir Robert Rich, lord Coningsby, and some others, stood to it resolutely, more particularly the first, who did great right to Mr. Russell, your grace, and my lord Marlborough, by name, shewing how improbable this fiction was, as to any of you.

"I should not have omitted Mr. Bridges,‡ who employed both industry and judgment in the debate. Howe would fain have had the examination run upon the papers, that he might have owned them, and gone about to prove them, no matter which way; that which made the question stick pretty long was, that the whigs came but slowly into the censuring the whole paper, and that which drove on the others to make an end of it was, Mr. Montagu's throwing out some words about the attainder, which they would gladly have avoided, and so shewed themselves easier in this.

"Temple first gave up sir John for a calumniator, and that his paper was to be declared scandalous. Then the question was immediately stated, lord Coningsby adding the tale to it, that this was a design to stifle the real plot. There was not above one or two

* This paper is also missing. † Mr. Foley.

‡ Afterwards first duke of Chandos.

cried no to it, but they kept their strength for the attainder. Then Musgrave,* Harcourt,† Dike, Temple, and Williams laid themselves out, but there was a great spirit against them, of those that remained, for the House was grown considerably thinner. Seymour‡ did not come in the afternoon; the attorney§ did his part.

"I hope your grace will find your satisfaction in this day's proceedings, and I am confident the king's business will fare the better for it, though I hear he had great doubts upon him, to the last, about bringing it into the House. It hath made no division among us, for those that opposed the attainder are the same that oppose the supplies, and I hope their courage will grow still less."

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On Fenwick's affair—The kindness of the king towards admiral Russell and the duke—On the proceedings in the House of Commons—Conduct of lord Monmouth—Affair of Smith.]

"*Nov.* 7-17, 1696.—My lord; I was so extremely ill of a cold, and it was so late before I came from Kensington, Thursday, that I did not write to your grace then, and I thought it the less necessary, because I doubted not but you would have the account from other hands. I will only observe to your grace, that which is really a justice due to the king, that he expressed himself with great regard and distinction, as to you and Mr. Russell. I will not trouble you with an account of the proceedings yesterday, in the House of Commons, because you will hear of it from persons who were present. But this is most certain, that nothing but the fixed opinion, that our friends have of your grace and Mr. Russell, could have brought them, with so much unanimity, to join in a vote, to which, as your grace did observe, they are not very naturally inclined.

"This morning my lord Monmouth has been with me, and pretends great difficulty to keep Smith from the House of

* Sir Christopher Musgrave.

† Sir Simon Harcourt, afterwards attorney-general; lord chancellor, under the administration of Harley; and finally created earl of Harcourt.

‡ Sir Edward Seymour. § Sir Thomas Trevor, attorney-general.

Commons. I have talked very freely to him upon the occasion, and have desired him to consider what work this might make at such a time; and, withal, have given him such a view of sir John Fenwick's paper, that he is much startled, and convinced that he and every whig is as much concerned in it, and as open to an accusation, as the persons who are named.

"It is a great comfort to me to hear that we are allowed to be in hopes of your being able to see London in some time. The king told me my lord president and others had been talking of bringing this matter of sir John Fenwick into the House of Lords, (but it was before the king's mentioning it at council,) and he was of opinion, that, if you were in town, it would never be attempted; and that, otherwise, it was not unlikely; and that he was in pain to think how it would be managed there."

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Congratulates him on the issue of sir John Fenwick's business in the House of Commons.]

"*London, Nov.* 7-17, 1696.—My lord; I am sure you will have a very particular account of what passed yesterday. I hope you will like it as well as your friends do, and think of nothing but your health, and coming to us as soon as that will give you leave. I wish the word *hearsay* had not been in the vote; and that sir John Fenwick had been left to the law, that the king's business might go on without interruption."

LORD WHARTON TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Congratulates him on the decision of the House of Commons—Conjectures on the fate of the bill of attainder—Suspicions of lord Sunderland.]

"*Whitehall, Nov.* 10-20, 1696.—Mr. Vernon hath, for these two last posts, promised me to make my excuse to your grace, that I have not been able to write to you; and hath, I am sure, given you a better account of every thing that hath passed than I could have done. I was so satisfied myself with the business of Friday, and with the spirit and warmth that was shewn in that day's debate, that (if it hath been well represented to your grace)

I will not doubt but you thought well of it too: I mean particularly as it related to yourself and Mr. Russell; for it must be understood, that nothing but that consideration could have put so easy an end to that business, in relation to other persons. I am pretty well assured the noble lord* that quitted his employment, some days before, is sensible now that he was not very well advised in it; and I am apt to think there never was more management than in bringing that about.

"I wish to God your grace were well enough to think of venturing up; and do hope that you yourself are so much of the opinion, how convenient it were for you to be here, that it is very unnecessary to make use of any arguments to persuade you to it.

"I am very apt to think the business of the attainder will go through the House of Commons, though I find a good many of our friends very good-natured, or scrupulous, in it. What fate it will have in the Lords I cannot guess; that will certainly depend very much on the weight will be laid on it at Kensington; and, if I am not mistaken, Mr. Felton's friend† in your Square is very uneasy and dissatisfied with it.

"I hope there is no question but your grace will be here before any thing that concerns yourself can be brought before that House; as it probably will be, if the bill comes up. But I never wish for your being here, so much as I do when I think of the gentleman I mentioned last. I confess I cannot think what he is doing, or what it is he is driving at. I am perhaps too much given to be jealous, especially of some people, and if I do him wrong, I ask his pardon; but I think, in my conscience, he is the same man he was always."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND.

[Grateful for his kindness in the business of Fenwick.]

"*Eyford, Nov.* 10-20, 1696.—My lord; I am extreme sensible that the business in the House of Commons, hitherto, has gone

* Lord Godolphin. † Lord Sunderland.

as well as I could desire; and much of it is owing to the industry of my friends, among whom none had a greater share than your lordship, to whose prudence, as well as kindness, great part of this success is due. I hope you will not suspect me of so much ingratitude, as not to own this obligation upon all occasions. If the king's business will suffer much interruption, by this method of proceeding with sir John Fenwick, I am sorry for it; but I do not see how he could be brought to a trial any other way. Cooke* is so shatter-brained a creature, that, if he were pardoned, it is very hazardous depending upon him; and perhaps this way will meet with a good deal of opposition in our House. I will not fail to make all the haste I can to town, but I have small hopes it will be very soon; for on Sunday I tried to take the air in my coach, and found I could not endure it yet."

LORD WHARTON TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Kindness and concern of the king—Anxious for his immediate return to town, before Fenwick's business be brought into the House of Lords.]

"*Whitehall, Nov.* 12-22, 1696.—I was yesterday at Kensington, at the king's dinner, who called me to him afterwards, and talked a good deal to me of several things that concerned your grace; both of what passed in the House of Commons, and of what might probably be the consequence of the same matter when it came into another place; and seemed pretty solicitous to know how you were in your health, and when it might be reasonably expected that you would be here. He expressed himself with as much concern and kindness upon this subject, as can be imagined; and at last commanded me to let your grace know, from him, that it was his desire and opinion, that you should try all the ways

* Mr. Cooke, son of sir Miles Cooke, one of the six clerks in chancery, was implicated, with others, in the same plot as Fenwick and lord Aylesbury. He was brought to trial on the evidence of Porter and Goodman, and, being found guilty, received sentence of death. He was, however, retained in prison, with the hope of extorting from him some important disclosures, and, perhaps, of making him an evidence against sir John Fenwick; but, although the ministry were disappointed in this object, his sentence was finally commuted for transportation.—Rapin, v. 14, p. 312.

you can think of, to get hither; and bid me tell you that the easiest and safest way you could take of coming up, would be on horseback, on some hunter that walked well, which perhaps is not ill-judged, if the weather be tolerable.

"I have said all this, more out of obedience than out of any imagination I have, that you want any argument to prevail with you to come up, or to make you wish yourself here; your grace knowing better than any body of what consequence it will be, that you should be in the Lords' House whenever your name may be used there. When any thing of the kind will be brought thither, is very uncertain, till to-morrow is over in the House of Commons. That House did yesterday agree (on sir John Fenwick's letter to the Speaker) to allow him three counsel and a solicitor; and this day have agreed that his counsel should plead at the bar; which doth not seem to me (as it doth to some) to be done in favour to him; but rather that there may appear all sort of fair-dealing in the judgment, which (I fancy) the House will send up against him."

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Anxious for his return to town—Kind expressions of the king—Uncertain how the business of sir John Fenwick may be taken in the House of Lords—Affair of Smith, and conduct of lord Monmouth.]

"*Nov.* 19-29, 1696.—My lord; I have not given your grace the trouble of my letters, since I had nothing to say to you, but what others (who were present at the debates of the House of Commons) were much better able to give you an account of, and who assured me I might depend upon their care that it should be done. The melancholy letter I had once, as it made more impression upon me than I can express, so it still makes me resolve against saying one word more, in order to persuade you to think of a journey to this place. Yet, I cannot but own to you, what my thoughts are (without failing, in some degree, as to the concern I profess to have in all that relates to your grace) that nothing but a very extraordinary endangering your health ought to hinder you from making a trial, whether, by small

journeys, you might not get hither. For, as the whole business in the House of Commons has proceeded as well as could be wished, and will, undoubtedly, end so in that House, so I am fully satisfied, if you were here, it would take what turn we had a mind to in the House of Lords, which is more than I can yet pretend to say, if your grace be absent, when that debate is to come on. The explaining of this matter is not very convenient for a letter, but I believe I do not judge wrong in what I say. The king never sees me, but he expresses a very passionate desire you would be here; and this is always attended with as kind expressions, in respect to you, as can be used. He took occasion to say, three or four times this night, how much he was pleased to hear that my lord Wharton was gone out of town, with an intent to see you, because he hoped he would encourage you to make another trial, if it was possible for you to come to town.

"As to the business of Smith, having had an intimation that the king had been told that story, I took occasion to speak to him of it; and he told me that he had been acquainted with it, very frankly; and that he had promised to see him, in order to prevent his making a complaint in the House of Commons. Having learnt that story from your grace, and more particularly from Mr. Vernon; and, withal, knowing the turn which had been contrived to give to that tale; I was well prepared to talk upon it, and was able to bring to the king's mind that passage about seizing him at Kensington; and how he spoke of that very *thing*, when he first opened the business of the plot to the Lords, at Kensington, and then said he had it from you; but that neither he nor you had much regarded it. This, by degrees, he perfectly recollected, with other circumstances of that matter; and, since that time, he has told me, that he told Smith, that he had been acquainted with that whole matter by you; that, though he had been made acquainted with the matter, yet that did not take away from his good meaning, in the discovery of what he had heard of that conspiracy, and that he would take care that he should not be unrewarded.

"Not being satisfied with my lord Monmouth's proceedings in

this and other matters, I did not give him the compliment, which I think you intended for him, by your last letter. But, my lord Wharton desiring me last night, that I would endeavour to put him in good humour, as that which he was informed he was in some degree inclined to, and what he thought would be of use, I have spent some time with him this day, and shall, in another conversation, learn what is to be expected from him, as to his carriage in the House of Lords, in relation to sir John Fenwick's business.

" It is grown very late, and I have already exceeded the length of a letter, and, therefore, shall conclude very abruptly," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD KEEPER SOMERS.

[Has received a summons to appear in the House of Lords—Will attend if his health permits.]

" *Eyford, Nov.* 21-*Dec.* 1, 1696.—My lord; I have received your lordship's letter of the 14th* of November, with the commands of the House of Lords, that I should attend them on the 23rd of this month. I have always been ready to pay that duty, when I have been able; and assure your lordship I never had a more earnest desire to do it than at this time, if the circumstances of my health were such as would allow me, in any manner, to endure the journey: I hope, therefore, I shall have their lordships' excuse, if I do not wait on them punctually at that time, since I hope it will be soon; and I assure your lordship I shall not neglect the first hour, that it is possible for me to be removed to London, that I may give my attendance on the House; and assure you that I am," &c.

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Considerations on Fenwick's business—Wishes him to repair to London.]

" *London, Nov.* 24-*Dec.* 4, 1696.—My lord; Your grace will

* This letter is not extant, but was the regular official summons to attend in the House of Peers, at the time when the bill of attainder against Fenwick was expected to be sent up from the House of Commons. In fact, we learn from the Journals that extraordinary means were adopted to enforce the personal attendance of the peers on this occasion, when proxies were not admitted.—Journals for Nov. 14 and 23, 1696.

believe that, between sir John Fenwick's business and that of the admiralty's miscarriages, I have but little time; I am almost dead with the fatigue. These reasons, I hope, will plead my excuse for not writing, and not to think it is want of respect to you, when I swear I have all imaginable duty, service, and respect. I know you had daily accounts from other hands of all that passed. I have often considered the papers you sent me, and though, in my own opinion, I thought some use might be made of them, at a proper time, I would not venture on my own judgment, but depended upon lord keeper's friendship to you and myself, therefore shewed them to him. This night we have read them over carefully, and he is of the same mind, that if sir John comes to be examined, some use may be made of them, and thinks, though they have contrived to pen it cunningly, it is plain that the whole shews an artifice; but, by your letter to Mr. Vernon, he hopes, as well as all your friends and servants, that your health will admit of your coming to town, in a little time, when we may consider farther of this affair. I know your desire to be here is equal to what all your friends have: it is certain if you were in town, he would find as little favour with the lords as he has done with us, but receive a just punishment for so foul and villanous a design.

"I will not send you any news, for the aforesaid reasons; but this being a secret, as I am made to believe, from a lord you will guess at,* that president of the council is what he knows will please you better than any thing; for in the summer you told him you could not serve in this office. I suppose lord Wharton is now with you: I wish you all the health you desire for yourself, and beg you will do me the justice to believe I am," &c.

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the business of Smith, which is satisfactorily settled—The House of Lords have excused his attendance—The king seems inclined to support the bill of attainder in the House of Lords.]

"*Nov.* 24-*Dec.* 4, 1696.—My lord; I am at present at great

* Lord Sunderland.

ease as to Smith's matter, and think the right course is taken in it. I mean that nothing less ought to have been done, and nothing more (as things stand) can be done safely. I will watch it, as well as my little intelligence will enable me, and will do every thing I can to stop any new motion of it, though I hope it will not stir again.

"Since I wrote to your grace I have had an opportunity of speaking again with the lord* you mention in your letter. He told me he would act as I would have him, and was in haste to be instructed, as he called it; but I have not seen him since. He also told me he expected the king would declare himself, as to the bill, which I let him know, and am told I may tell my lord, he will do it to the utmost, so that I am prepared for that lord, when he gives me an opportunity.

"Your grace was excused by the House, as to the day prefixed, before your letter came to me, upon the calling of your name.

"I am most unfeignedly glad to hear of the good effect of the Bath waters, which I hope you will be every day more sensible of, and I cannot express how much I am pleased with having some prospect of your coming to town, which, I think, would make every thing go well.

"I am told my lord S———† begins to be of opinion, that the bill will pass in the House of Lords. The king does now concern himself that it should pass there, and if he goes on to do so, I do not see but it will be likely enough to go through. In all probability it will be brought up on Wednesday. The opposers pretend to try their strength upon the first reading.

"I have troubled you with this, because you seemed to inquire after it in your letter. I shall only add that I am," &c.

---

* Lord Monmouth. † Sunderland.

CHAPTER 3.

1696—1697.

Decision of the House of Lords on the bill of attainder—Disclosure of the insidious practices of lord Monmouth with Fenwick and Smith—Farther proceedings in parliament on this subject, and disgrace and imprisonment of Monmouth—Correspondence in December, 1696, and January, 1697.

HAVING thus developed the principal features of the proceeding against sir John Fenwick, in the House of Commons, we now offer to the reader the correspondence which occurred, during the progress of the bill of attainder in the House of Peers.

The bill was introduced on the 26th of November, and read the first time on the first of December, and the second on the 18th. Fenwick was again personally examined, and again displayed the same prevarication as before; but so hostile was the bill represented to the spirit of the constitution, that the supporters of it gradually diminished, on each division, until it was at length carried by a majority of only seven, on the 23rd of December-2nd of January.

This measure was accomplished principally by the spirit and activity of lord keeper Somers, and the whig chiefs; who were prompted, not only by an imperious sense of public justice, but by private friendship for the duke of Shrewsbury and admiral Russell. In the Lords, as in the Commons, however, many adherents of government, and personal friends of the king, were adverse to the principle of the bill, and the duke of Leeds, president of the council, was one of forty peers who signed an able protest.* We cannot, however, wonder at this diversity of

* I think it proper to mention that, in the Memoirs of the Duke of Marlborough, chap. 6, I have erroneously asserted that lord Sunderland was among the opponents of the bill.

opinion; for even the king, though fully convinced of the guilt of Fenwick, evidently acquiesced with reluctance, in a measure which was chiefly grounded on the deficiency of legal proof.

LORD WHARTON TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Recommends him to recur to other medical advice—Proceedings in the House of Lords on the first reading of the bill of attainder—Declarations of lords Marlborough, Bath, and Godolphin—Singular conduct of lord Monmouth.]

"*Whitehall, Dec.* 1-11, 1696.—I cannot tell your grace how concerned I was to find your coach at Woodstock, on Saturday, and to be there told of the misfortune that hindered you from continuing your resolution of being there yourself. I wish to God those, that have your cure in hand, do pursue the proper methods in order to it; and though I have all the reverence in the world for the physician you have sent for, yet it is not impossible but that he may mistake your case, and may, perhaps, be set right, by advising and discoursing with others. My lord Montague was very earnest with me upon this subject to-day, to write to you, that you would send for a french surgeon, whose name is De Rusiere, and I am inclinable enough to think that it may be more in the surgeon's way to deal with your distemper, than in that of the physician's, at least it cannot be improper that you advise with some of them, before you let this matter go too far; and I cannot but put you in mind, that there is one Collbach, (of whom I am sure your grace has heard,) who is so particularly famous for the stopping of blood, that I cannot but wish you heard at least what he says to you.

"What hath passed in the Lords' House this day is hardly worth giving you an account of. The House was first called over, and an order made out, that no lord should go out of the House without leave. There appeared 119 lords. The bill was then read, and presently after, the paper sent by sir John Fenwick to the king, and the examination taken by Mr. Vernon. After which lord Nottingham, lord Normanby, and lord president insisted upon it, that before sir John Fenwick was called in, the House should have satisfaction, whether there had been no other papers, letters, or informations sent to the king, besides those produced, and that a

message should be sent to the king, to be resolved in that particular. This debate took up a good part of the day, my lord steward and the other lords justices not making the matter so clear, as some thought they might have done, but at last it was ordered that the king should be sent to by the white staves, as soon as the House was up, and in the mean time sir John Fenwick should be called in.

" My lord keeper had then orders to tell him, that whatever confession he should make there, should not be made use of to his prejudice, either there or elsewhere. The papers were then carried down to him, to know if he owned the one, and if that were his hand-writing, and if the other were the examination, taken of him by Mr. Vernon; and he was told, that if he was in a disposition to make any confession relating to those papers, or to any thing else, this was the proper time to do it, if he had any thing to say, that were of his own knowledge, or that he could make good by proof. To which he said, he was ignorant of the laws, and of that which might do him good or hurt; that he desired he might be heard by his counsel against the bill, and that the House would allow him counsel, and his solicitor, and an order for his witnesses. After which he was called in again, and told, that what was expected of him, was only of facts, that none knew but himself, and in which counsel could not advise him. To which he said he had nothing more to say, but what he had said; and then desired that sir Thomas Powis and the barrister Shore* might be assigned his counsel, and that sir Francis Pemberton might have leave to come to him, to advise him, and named Mr. Dyson for his solicitor, and desired time to name his witnesses. After which, Tuesday next was appointed for his counsel to be heard against the bill, and then the debates will be, whether the bill shall be read a second time.

" I forgot to tell you, that after the reading of the paper, my lord Marlborough first stood up, and spoke to this purpose: ' that he did not wonder to find a man in danger, willing to throw his guilt upon any other body; that he had some satisfaction to be owned in such good company; but that he assured their lordships

* Sir Bartholomew Shore.

that he had no sort of conversation with him, upon any account whatsoever, since this government, which he said upon his word and honour.' My lord of Bath now made solemn protestations of the wrong he did him, in what he said concerning him. After which my lord Godolphin said, 'that he found himself named in two places, first, as having been looked upon as being in king James's interest, from the beginning, and afterwards, as having entered into a negotiation, as was expressed in the paper. As to the first, he confessed he was one of those that had, to the last, continued in king James's service, and he did not know, but from that, king James and his friends might imagine him to continue in that interest, but as to the latter part, there was nothing in the world so false.'

"There was, after sir John Fenwick was withdrawn, a complaint made of Fells, the keeper of Newgate, that he allowed him pen, ink, and paper, contrary to the express order of the House. Upon which he was committed to the gate-house, and sir John Fenwick, and the other prisoners of state in Newgate, were put into the charge of the sheriffs of London.

"My lord Monmouth was observed to be pretty easy and favourable to the prisoner, and to give him all encouragement, to have made out the accusations in his paper; but when he found him resolved to do nothing of the kind, seemed to shew a good deal of zeal against him afterward.

"I am apt to think all the delays in the world will be made use of in this matter, and if your grace can make a little haste to be well, you may come before it is over."

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Money given to Smith—Considerations on that affair—Brief remarks on the transactions relative to the bill of attainder—The king concerned for his grace's relapse, and desists from pressing his journey to town.]

"*Dec.* 10-20, 1696.—My lord; I hope your grace is so just as to think, that the reason why I have not, for some time, given you the trouble of my letters, is, because I had nothing of any moment to acquaint you with.

"This morning, understanding that Smith grows troublesome again, upon pretence of wanting money, and finding that my lord P——* had given him but five guineas, this second time, upon his importunity, and not knowing how that might be improved, I ventured to tell my lord, that I made no doubt but that Mr. Vernon would pay twenty or thirty guineas to any servant of his, in case he would find a time to give it to Smith, as from himself. This I presumed to do, upon what Mr. Vernon had said to me before, and in this manner I thought it was not possible to turn it to any inconvenient interpretation. My lord agreeing to this, I told Mr. Vernon of it, who will pay twenty guineas to my lord's servant, Van Dorp, and my lord will dispose of it accordingly.

"I am so particular, that your grace may judge if any step in this transaction be wrong, that we may mend it hereafter; for I am not sure but that once again there may be such another occasion, by reason of the delays this business is like to meet with in the House of Lords, which, joined to the necessities of the man, and the temper of those who transact with him, may make him presume yet farther.

"This gives me an occasion of mentioning a proposition, which my lord Rochester made to my lord Marlborough, of endeavouring to get a vote in the House upon the paper. I told my lord Marlborough my thoughts very freely, which I am sure I need not repeat, because I doubt not but he will write the whole matter to you at large. But give me leave to say, that as I think my lord's meaning was, to make this matter help towards the rejecting of the bill, so I think, till the bill has a farther progress, such a proposal would be as certain not to succeed, and so divide those, who at present seem to be united for the bill, as it will be necessary to have it pressed in the proper time.

"It is so very late, that I am come from Kensington, that I am afraid Mr. Vernon may be gone from the office, which obliges me to write in great haste.

"The king told me this night the account he had from *sir*

* Portland.

Thomas Millington, of your grace's condition, that with care and quiet there was great reason to hope well, but that to stir would endanger your life; and he is thereupon as much concerned to command you not to attempt coming to town, as he was before desirous to have you here."

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the danger of a french invasion—Ill-provided state of the fleet, and inability of government to obtain supplies of money.]

"*Dec.* 15-25, 1696.—My lord; I have for some time been so ill in my health, and at the same time forced to attend, to prevent the malice of knaves, that would undo me, that I have not had time to write to your grace, and have contented myself with asking after your health, of those people that had frequent accounts of it. And I hope you will believe me, when I assure you, that no servant you have is more sincerely glad at the news, that you will do well again, provided you give yourself ease and quiet, which I confess is a hard matter to do, considering the villainy that is set on foot, and carried on by ill-designed men. All I have to comfort myself with, is, that knavery will have its reward, and I question not but the baseness and villainy of these men will be detected; and, therefore, let me beg your grace not to suffer yourself to let their designs make any impression on you, which will gratify them in a most sensible manner, and as they wish and desire.

"I believe it is no longer a question, but the french have a formidable design against England. Whether what we are doing, and the king will have done, is the way to prevent it, time must shew, which is to have a squadron of ships sent to cruise on the french coast, and off Brest. For my own part I dread their being disabled by storm, and England left naked, and if they should not go, and the french should land, I do not know who can answer for their lying at Spithead. But what is of more fatal consequence, we have no provisions for the ships that are otherwise ready, nor have the government any money to give for that service,

or the —— * credit for a barrel of beer. These are melancholy reflections, and, for my own part, I can see little more to help on but Providence.

"The king has not yet resolved to send for any men, out of Flanders, without which, if the enemy should land, I know we are not in a condition, as to numbers, to make any head against them. If fortune carries us over this business, I fancy we may expect quiet afterwards, but what will be the fate of the attempt, God knows.

"I say nothing of this day's business in the Lords' House, because I know you will have it from those that will be very particular, nor have I any thing more to add, but that I am with the greatest truth and respect imaginable," &c.

Hitherto we have abstained from troubling the reader with unnecessary comments, but the succeeding correspondence contains such extraordinary disclosures, that we cannot omit to recommend it to particular attention. It will there appear, that lord Monmouth,† who has already been described as taking a warm and mysterious interest in the fate of sir John Fenwick, had

* Illegible.

† Charles Mordaunt, earl of Monmouth, was the eldest son of John, lord Mordaunt, and viscount Avalon, who was second son of John, first earl of Peterborough.

This nobleman, who was afterwards so well known under the title of the earl of Peterborough, was born about 1658, and at an early period was distinguished for his gallant and martial spirit. He commenced his career in the sea service, during the war with the state of Algiers, and afterwards assisted in the siege of Tangier, then the great theatre of british valour. During the reign of king James, he stood foremost among the zealous opponents to the arbitrary measures of the court: and repairing to Holland, under the plea of entering into the dutch navy, was one of the first who offered his services to the prince of Orange, by whom he was treated with a degree of confidence, which neither his years, nor his eccentric character seemed to warrant.

In 1688, he accompanied the expedition to England, and, on the accession of William, was sworn of the privy council, made one of the lords of the bed-chamber, and placed at the head of the Treasury. That he might be enabled to assist at the coronation, he was, in April, 1689, created earl of Monmouth. He was removed from the Treasury on the dismission of the whig ministry, in November, 1690, but continued to retain his posts in the royal household.

prompted him in his different charges; and had even employed the agency of his aunt, the duchess of Norfolk, to furnish lady Mary Fenwick with papers and suggestions of farther imputations, in the hope that some of these hints, which were partly true, might give a stronger colour of credibility to the rest, and raise suspicions in the mind of the king, against the duke of Shrewsbury and the other persons accused. He also encouraged Fenwick to avail himself of these insinuations, by offering his assistance, in obtaining an acquittal; but finding him too honourable to adopt his informations, he evinced the bitterest enmity against him, and supported the bill of attainder with greater vehemence, than even those who were personally implicated in the charges. Such unmerited enmity provoked lady Mary Fenwick; and with a view to expose his treachery, she instigated her nephew, the earl of Carlisle, to move that her husband might be examined, with respect to the advices which he had received from other persons, in framing his accusations. The conduct of Monmouth was thus unexpectedly developed; and the farther disclosures, which occurred on the examination of Smith, who was another of his instruments, excited such indignation, that a vote was readily obtained for his committal to the Tower.

LORD WHARTON TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

After lamenting that his grace was prevented from repairing to London, by another relapse, and recommending farther medical advice, he proceeds to describe the final reading of the bill of attainder, and the unexpected discovery of lord Monmouth's machinations:—

"*Dec. 24-Jan. 3*, 1696-7.—Some other of your grace's humble servants have undertaken to give you their opinions of what hath

Being of a restless, enterprising, and aspiring temper, he caballed with all parties, and was suspected of entertaining a correspondence with the exiled monarch, though at the same time he was treated with unabated consideration by king William, and enjoyed the honour of frequent and confidential audiences. The motive of his aversion to the duke of Shrewsbury, we are unable to trace; but, from the levity of his character, and the nature of the plot itself, we can scarcely attribute it to any other cause, than his passion for notoriety, and predominant disposition to intrigue.

passed in the House of Lords, for the two days last past, and have commanded me to give you as good an account as I can remember of matters of fact.

"On Tuesday last, the 22nd, it was ordered, that the bill for attainting sir John Fenwick should be read the third time. Then the House was called (which was done every day that the debate hath been about this bill). The lord Jefferys presented a petition from sir John Fenwick, by which he desired he might be heard before the third reading of the bill (which was granted without opposition), and the House adjourned till he was brought from Newgate. When he came to the bar, he said to this effect: That he had a desire to clear himself as much as possible. That the bill, as it was drawn by the king's learned counsel did not say he was guilty; that the word guilty was put in as an amendment, in the House of Commons, from which he inferred, that the king's counsel, who drew the bill, did not think him guilty. That when he went to the King's-head, in Leadenhall-street, he went not with any intention to send an invitation to king James of coming hither with any french force, nor did he consent to any such message, by any words he said. That he had no knowledge of the late intended invasion from Calais, nor knew any person that had, nor was he prepared with horses or arms, then or at any time for these four years last past. (All which he declared with the most solemn asseverations.) And last of all, that what he had written in the paper he gave to the duke of Devonshire, was truth, as far as he knew.

"My lord keeper then asked him, if he had any thing more to say, or if he were inclined to confess any thing to the House. To which he answered, that he had no more to add, but submitted himself to their lordships, only desired doctor White might come to him, and his wife.

"When he was withdrawn, lord Carlisle desired he might be called in, and asked, if he received any directions, either by message or writing, how to govern himself on his trial; to which he answered, that he had received no advice but from his counsel. Lord Carlisle desired then, that he might be called in again, and asked him, if he had not received any such directions from some member of the

House of Commons, or of this House; to which he said, he had not received any such, since he had been at the bar of the Lords. After many questions and answers, he owned at last, that whilst he was before the House of Commons, he had received a paper, brought by his wife, which (as she said) was given to her by the duchess of Norfolk,* from my lord Monmouth; that he had it not, but had returned it to his wife again. Upon this lord Monmouth desired the duchess of Norfolk might be sent for; and lord Carlisle desired Mrs. Lawson might be sent for, and lady Mary, who was sent for.

"It was then moved, that sir John Fenwick might be called in, and asked, if he were willing to make any explanation of those things which he offered to explain to the king; and lord steward pressed him to explain, when called in. He then objected, that he wanted a security that nothing that he should say should prove to his prejudice. The House then passed a vote, that nothing that he should say at the bar of the House should prove to his prejudice; which, when he was acquainted with, he objected that the security of a vote continued no longer than during the session. The House upon this voted an address to the king, that nothing which sir John Fenwick should say at the bar of the House, should be made use of as evidence against him, in any other place. He then objected that the address might be either granted or refused, and that he had no security till the king returned an answer. Upon which the House adjourned, till I took a journey to Kensington, and brought back the king's answer, which was in the affirmative.

"When he was acquainted with it, he said, that when he first spoke with the duke of Devonshire, he insisted upon two things, which were, that he should have a general pardon, and that he should not be made an evidence: to which he said the duke told him, that there was no objection made to his demands; upon which he depended that they were granted. But his grace de-

* Mary, daughter of Henry, second earl of Peterborough, and wife of Thomas, duke of Norfolk, who was then separated from her husband, on a charge of adultery.

clared that he gave him no answer at all, when he made those demands; but acquainted the king with them; who returned answer that he would not capitulate; with which he acquainted sir John Fenwick, and received his paper. Sir John said he heard no such words; but lord steward pressing him at last, to say whether he ever made him any promise of either of these things, he confessed he had not, but yet he made no objection.

"After this, my lord keeper had orders to tell him, that the House did not think fit beforehand to make him any such promise; but that they would intercede with the king for him, if they found the discovery he made deserved it; but that it was more proper that he should trust the House, than that the House should trust him. But he was very positive that he would say nothing till he had that security, and was, therefore, sent away, being told that this was the last time he should have an opportunity of speaking.

"The messengers that went for the three ladies, returned with lady Mary, but brought word they could not find the duchess and Mrs. Lawson.

"Lady Mary said she had received three papers at several times from the duchess, which (she said) came from lord Monmouth; that she had shewn them to sir John, but had kept them herself; and had brought them with her; two of which papers were only copies, (the originals being desired back,) but the third was the original. She said she had desired to speak with lord Monmouth herself, but he refused it; but that he had offered to speak to sir Thomas Powis, which sir Thomas refused. It was by this time near twelve o'clock, and the House adjourned the reading and debate of the bill, till the next day.

"I will not entertain your grace with the particulars of this debate. It lasted about six hours, and was managed by lord Nottingham, lord president, lord Normanby, bishop of London, lord Torrington, lord Ferrers on the one side; and the archbishop of Canterbury, bishop of Sarum, lord Tankerville, lord Monmouth, lord Cornwallis, lord Haversham, on the other. At the close of the debate, the duke of Devonshire made a motion to

change the penalty of the bill, from loss of life to perpetual imprisonment; with which lord Rochester closed (and it looked as if concerted between them); but the question was soon after put, which went as you will find in the inclosed paper.*

"At six o'clock the duchess of Norfolk and Mrs. Lawson came to the House, and, after the question of the bill, the duchess was called in. She seemed to turn the matter as much to the advantage of my lord Monmouth as she well could. When the papers were shewed to her, she said she knew them not, nor of whose hand-writing they were. Being desired to read them, and to recollect herself, if they were to the same effect with any papers she had seen before; she said she could not, for though perhaps she might have read them, yet she did not at all mind them, nor remember the substance, they being matters in which she had no sort of concern. She owned that she conveyed two or three papers from my lord Monmouth to lady Mary; but whether these were the same, or copies of them, or to the same effect, she could not tell. She owned she had had some discourse with lord Monmouth, of advice to sir John on his trial; and that, out of compassion to him, she had employed herself in carrying the same to lady Mary. She was upon this examination near an hour, in which she behaved herself with more good sense than ever I saw; and my lord Normanby carried it on with his usual kindness to the lord concerned, who behaved himself with more disturbance of mind, than I thought he could have been capable of.

"When she was gone, (Mrs. Lawson was not at all examined,) he said to this purpose, that he had indeed talked with the duchess upon this subject, which was occasioned by the discourse was spread abroad, that he was in sir John Fenwick's first paper, of which the duchess gave him assurance to the contrary, by order of lady Mary; that what he advised and designed was only to persuade the discovering of the truth; and that they had made a collection of several things, from several people, which they seemed to lay all to him. He was so confused in what he said,

* The bill, as we have already mentioned, passed by a majority of only seven.

and it was so late, and the House so weary, that it was hard to make either head or tail of what he said; and so that matter rests; the papers being left with lord keeper. He will, perhaps, give you an account of them, which I cannot well do; only that they were heads of advice, by what methods to make good and prove the information he had given in, against the four first lords in the first paper; and several arguments to persuade him of the reasonableness of his taking those methods to save himself. I must have tired your grace by this time. I am in the country till towards Twelve-tide, and wish I could learn there was any hopes of meeting your grace in town about that time."

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Proceedings in the House of Lords on passing the bill of attainder—Astonishment excited by the conduct of lord Monmouth.]

"*Dec.* 24-*Jan.* 3, 1696-7.—My lord; I never trouble your grace but when I think something which has happened may give me a reasonable occasion; and, therefore, I hope you conclude that when I do not write, it is because I have nothing worth writing about; or because I take it for granted, that you have informations from persons, who can give you a more particular account.

"The thing I hinted at in my last, which I supposed my lord Marlborough would give your grace a particular account of, because he said he would do so, was a proposition from my lord Rochester, that an attempt should be made, to have the same vote in the House of Lords, or to the same effect, as was made in the House of Commons, expressing their opinion of sir John Fenwick's paper, which we judged to be wholly improper at the time he proposed it, and designed principally to obstruct the passing of the bill, by dividing some who were likely to be earnest for it.

"I will not pretend to give you an account of yesterday's business in the House of Lords, because I assure myself you have it at large from my lord Wharton. The majority of 18 upon the former divisions was reduced to 7; when the question was

put for passing the bill, the lord steward, lord chamberlain,* lord privy seal,† and the duke of Ormond voting against it: the prince‡ voted for it, but came late, and was brought with difficulty (though not proceeding from himself) as I understand.

"The business of my lord Monmouth, which was started on Tuesday, to divert the business of the bill, and was carried on yesterday, after the bill was passed, and stands now adjourned to the first day when the House meets again, is so very amazing, that people are at a loss what to think of it. We had heard of it before, in general, and, amongst other things, that he had encouraged sir John Fenwick to name Smith, upon a pretence that he would produce original letters, to justify his paper, which we took to be a contrivance to bring Smith before the House. And since your knowing it would perhaps make you uneasy, and could be of no service, I was utterly against making any mention of it to your grace. But now the bill is over, and that it is not possible it should hurt any body but himself, I think it seasonable to acquaint you, that on Wednesday it was introduced by a question of my lord Carlisle to sir John Fenwick, whether he had not received instructions how to manage himself at the bar, from a member of one of the Houses. To this he said, my lady Mary Fenwick had brought him some papers, and told him she had them from the duchess of Norfolk, who had them from this lord.

"My lady Mary, upon oath affirmed the same thing in effect, and produced *three* papers, two of which she said were copies, and the third the original. The duchess would not own those to be the papers, pretending she was not nice in considering or reading them, the business not being her own, and she acting only out of compassion; but she owned she had papers from my lord, and did transmit them to my lady Mary.

"That your curiosity may be fully satisfied in this matter, I have sent you copies of the papers, (which I must oblige you not to own you ever saw, because I doubt it is not to be justified,

* The earl of Dorset. † The earl of Pembroke.
‡ Prince George, of Denmark.

they being put by the House into my hands;) the two first were given to my lady Mary, when the bill depended in the House of Commons.*

* This communication consisted, as has been already stated, of three different papers. The first was written in Fenwick's own name, and contained various demands, which he intended to offer, for the purpose of substantiating his charges. Thus: lords Portland and Romney were to be questioned concerning intelligence given to the king, of the correspondence held with king James, by persons of consequence in England. The duke of Norfolk was also to be questioned on the same subject; and particularly as to the information, which he had received from captain Smith, and communicated to the king. The king himself was to be requested to impart the information laid against lord Marlborough, when he was dismissed and sent to the Tower; and likewise respecting letters from king James, and his queen, to lord Godolphin. Lastly, captain Smith was to be examined as to his correspondence with the duke of Shrewsbury, and to be required to produce some of his original letters.

The second paper was evidently intended as a species of supplement to the first, and chiefly consists of arguments in support of the probability of his charges. A new and distinct insinuation, is, however, brought forward against the duke of Shrewsbury and admiral Russell, in these words: "Insist on the manner and time of Shrewsbury's laying down, and Russell's laying down, when the three admirals came in; and the surprising and sudden coming in of Shrewsbury again, which could not then be voluntary; and what could constrain him, but the king's having some discovery of his dealings, by which means he was in his power." Against lords Marlborough and Godolphin, the insinuations contained in the first paper are also renewed in another shape.

This paper is written partly in the first, and partly in the third, person, in a crude and incongruous style; and is evidently a series of hints furnished to the prisoner, by another hand, rather than the suggestions of his own mind. It is introduced with the following singular observations:—

"I insist on the improbability of my falsely accusing the great men of several parties for my safety.

"That, allowing any part of what I have said upon hearsay to be false, it may, nevertheless, be true, that such were the informations given to me, by those that governed party."

The last paper was drawn up after the bill had passed the House of Commons, and contains a series of considerations addressed to the prisoner, as to the best mode of defeating it in the House of Lords. He is earnestly urged to make an ingenuous confession, and, above all, to prove the truth of his charges, with the proviso that "he could, with truth, abide by it; and, if so, his conscience, his reputation, and safety, are equally concerned in it." This argument is enforced in a variety of forms, and particular stress is laid on the consideration, that he would thus neither alienate or endanger any of the Tory and Jacobite party, while he would inevitably divide and weaken those who were hostile to his cause.*

* From the papers, as printed in the Journals of the Lords, January 9, 1696-7.

"I will pass no censure upon them, but leave your grace to your own thoughts upon such a subject, and will only add, how very heartily I wish an entire recovery of your health, and how very sincerely I am," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD KEEPER SOMERS.

[Death of sir Charles Porter, lord chancellor of Ireland, a fortunate event—Strongly recommends Mr. Methuen to succeed—Uncertainty as to the fate of sir John Fenwick.]

"*Eyford, Dec.* 24-*Jan.* 3, 1696-7; My lord; this post having brought the news of sir Charles Porter's death, I cannot but look upon it a great good fortune to the king's affairs in Ireland,* to be rid of a man, who had formed so troublesome a party in that kingdom, which may now easily be set right again, if the government be put in good hands, and his employment filled with an honest and prudent person. I hope your lordship's recommendation, as it ought, will have the principal influence on the king's choice, and, therefore, I might rest satisfied, that it will be well supplied. However, having here more leisure to think than I know how usefully to employ, I too often busy my head with what I am sensible I do not understand. One instance of this kind is my venturing to offer Mr. Methuen's name to your lordship's thoughts, to be chancellor of Ireland. I take him to be a man of good temper and prudence, and, by all I could ever learn, perfectly well affected to his majesty's interest. How able he may be in his profession, what other objections, or what other person may be offered much more fit, I submit; but know this gentleman is one the king has a good opinion of, and think he has behaved himself very prudently abroad. This would probably open a way for disposing of sir John Rushout, much to his satisfaction; but though I should be glad to serve sir John, yet would not wish to do it, so much to the king's expense, as to endeavour to promote a person to the great seal of Ireland, who was not well qualified for so considerable a station.

* For an account of Irish affairs, see the correspondence with the king, p. 109; and the next chapter.

"We are yet here in uncertainty about sir John Fenwick's fate. You have been so tired with that business, that it is scarce civil to name his name; and for the same reason, much less mention my own health, which is so very inconstant, that three days ago I thought myself near well; but this thaw has made such a change for the worse, that gives me cause to apprehend my condition is far from being so well as I hoped; but let it be what it will, whilst I am any thing, I must be, with great truth," &c.

We here present a few additional details on the third reading of the bill, which are found in a letter from Mr. Vernon, because they contribute to shew the extreme difficulty, which attended its passage through the House of Lords.

MR. VERNON TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Dec.* 24-*Jan.* 3, 1696-7.—I shall first acquaint your grace that the Lords sat till nine; the bill of attainder was passed between seven and eight: it was carried only by a majority of seven, and one would wonder it passed at all, when one considers who they were that voted against it, particularly all the lords justices who had voices, except the archbishop of Canterbury, who spoke for the bill to admiration. My lord Godolphin, being of that opinion, was the less wondered at, since it was consistent with his former vote against the second reading; but my lord privy seal, lord steward, and lord chamberlain, renounced their former vote, as also did the duke of Ormond, duke of Somerset, lord Willoughby of Eresby, lord Fitzwaters, and some others.

"The bishops stuck as they were, the prince and lord Bradford stayed it out, and voted for the bill; lord Chesterfield, who would have been against it, was absent. The lords who were against the bill thought to have cast a reproach upon the bishops, for differing from them, but my lord of Canterbury wiped it off, and justified their opinions from Scripture, reason, and whatever else was proper to support it. The former day's proceedings did not hinder, but the earl of Monmouth spoke and voted for the bill."

The conduct of Monmouth seems to have excited no less abhorrence than surprise. Indeed, nothing could equal the atrocity of the charge, except the effrontery with which he disavowed it, when he was disappointed by its failure. An extract from a letter of Mr. Vernon will display the contemptible evasions with which he endeavoured to justify and gloss his attempt:

"*Dec.* 29-*Jan.* 8, 1696-7.—I hear of him, in other conversations that he denies the giving any papers, or particular advices; that he rails at the duchess, says she is perjured; and his lady doth the same, and yet hath sent to the duchess to know when she may wait upon her; so that no stone is to be left unturned, to bring this matter off one way or another; and some are to be disposed for public considerations to let the prosecution fall. If they do it, I hope they will be satisfied, that he be first made to understand he receives a grace, and not bestows one. He was with the king on Sunday near two hours. I do not believe he hath convinced his majesty, that he hath kept within bounds in this matter."

It is, indeed, singular to observe Monmouth treated with this extraordinary consideration by the king, at the very moment when he laboured under a charge so disgraceful; and no less singular to find lord Sunderland interesting himself in his behalf, and striving to promote his reconciliation with the duke of Shrewsbury, and those whom he had so insidiously endeavoured to injure. This interference, as will hereafter appear, gave great offence to the whigs.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Congratulates him on the conclusion of Fenwick's business.]

"*Dec.* 29-*Jan.* 8, 1696-7.—My lord; All your friends are so well pleased with the conclusion of sir John Fenwick's affair, in what relates to you, that I cannot but join with some, who I believe have let you know their sense of it already. I was always of opinion it could have no other end, and we are now more

impatient than ever for your perfect recovery, that we may see you here. I hope you are so just, as to believe I yield to none in being most truly," &c.

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the affair of sir John Fenwick—Lord Monmouth wishes for an accommodation, and is supported by lord Sunderland—Presses the Duke of Shrewsbury not to resign.]

" *Dec.* 31-*Jan.* 10, 1696-7.—My lord; I am extremely concerned to find, by Mr. Vernon, that your health is not like to be restored to you, so soon as I was in hopes it would. I know you have so particular an account of our proceedings here, that I shall trouble you with but little on that subject, only this I must tell you, as a piece of news, that is come only to my knowledge as yet, that the lord* that has made all this bustle, has been this morning with our pretended friend,† and proposes peace, and that friend of ours seems inclined that way. The answer I made was, that I would endeavour to drive it as far as it would go, as I supposed the rest of the persons named by him would do the same, for since he had run about the town, to all people that would give him the hearing, to asperse us, and now seeing he could do nothing, in order to justify himself, he desires to have this matter made up and his villany concealed. I could not help saying this with some heat, and I believe it is right, for they are all knaves alike; God deliver honest men out of their hands. I long to see you, and had not this foolish report happened about a descent, I had resolved to a-laid coaches, to a come down to you.

" Whatever you resolve to do, I will do the same. I find the party will not hear of any body's talking of your quitting; but this is a subject too large to write on; but upon the whole matter, if it be agreeable to your judgment, before you take your resolution, give me leave to have some discourse with you: not that I am so vain to think myself a proper man to prevail with you, but this I assure you, whatever you resolve on, I will take my fortune in it. I have nothing more to trouble you with, but that I am," &c.

* Lord Monmouth. † Lord Sunderland.

Although the fate of Fenwick may be said to have little connection with the duke of Shrewsbury, yet we cannot dismiss the subject, without observing that the bill of attainder received the royal assent on the 11th of January. Attempts were made to procure a reprieve, or commutation of punishment, but without effect; and he was beheaded on Tower-hill, on the 28th of January, 1696-7. He behaved with great firmness at the place of execution, and delivered a sealed paper to the sheriff, solemnly disavowing any share in the assassination plot, and denying the charge of conspiring to promote an invasion from France, but strenuously professing his loyalty to king James, and testifying the most fervent hope of his speedy restoration.

The subsequent letters detail the consequences which arose out of the accusations of Fenwick, and in particular relate the proceedings against lord Monmouth. They shew also the result of the examination of Smith, whose accusations against the noble secretary, at first assumed the most serious character, and awakened the deepest interest; but, on inquiry, proved no less frivolous than unfounded.

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the proceedings of lord Monmouth, and the affair of Smith.—Thinks that these pretended disclosures cannot turn to the prejudice of his grace.]

"*Jan.* 5-15, 1696-7.—I was extremely desirous of sending your grace something more material, when I wrote, than this is like to bring; yet the time of the meeting of the House of Lords coming near, I would not defer longer to tell you my thoughts of what my lord Monmouth's business is likely to end in. At first (as I am told, for I did not see him) there was a war declared, and it was to be expected how it would break out. Since that, overtures of accommodation have taken place, and some, who are not unknown to your grace; have thought it not unreasonable, that people should be easy in it, because no one could be responsible to what a degree such a temper might be driven. To tell you very freely my opinion, I think, and I have some reason for it, that the party himself has no hopes of doing any thing of that kind, which

is material. And I believe he is sufficiently informed of the consequences, so as not rashly to run himself upon what must turn upon himself only, and upon this ground it is that I believe the flag of truce has been hung out.

"My lord M———* and Mr. R———† will be with me to-morrow morning, and I shall then know their thoughts, as I suppose, and learn what informations they have got. But I think all the discourses, which have been given, out are in hopes to prevail for some moderation, and not to have things pushed to extremity against the person concerned.

"As to the business of Smith, it is not possible it should turn to any the least disadvantage to your grace; for, if that matter should be any way mentioned, the king will say, he was informed of it by your grace, from time to time. As to the original letters, I dare say you may depend upon it, as a mere artifice, to bring sir John Fenwick to call upon Smith; which he would never have done, if he had thought the letters had imported no more than what those notes your grace wrote to Smith, do concern; so that, if I am able to judge, I think this whole matter (as far as I can yet see into it) does not deserve to take up your thoughts any longer, because whatever disposition there may be, there is no power to do mischief; and I hope my next to your grace will inform you that my conjecture is become a certainty.

"Upon what Mr. Vernon said to me from your grace, I did send to have the accusation made by Pean inquired into, and I find there is nothing in it more, than that the man he pretends to charge, has absconded upon it.

"As to Mr. Methuen's business, I am sure I shall be willing, in that and all other things, to go along with your grace; but, as I have no sort of objection, so I can say nothing particular as to his qualifications for that part of the business which relates to the chancery. I am sure I have nobody else to propose, and, if I had, I would never do it, when I knew you had one in your thoughts."

* Marlborough. † Russell.

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Examination of Smith, and proceedings of the House of Lords on his communications.]

"*Jan.* 12-22, 1696-7.—My lord; I was in full expectation to have sent you word this night of the entire determination of all those things, which have created some uneasiness to your grace, whilst you have been confined by your illness, at such a distance from this place; and, indeed, I did not intend to have given you the trouble of another letter, till I could have given you such an account. But the House of Lords having ordered Mr. Vernon to send a messenger to your grace, to know if Smith's letters to you, in February last, are extant, and if so, to desire that you would find a way to have them laid before the House on Friday next, I thought it absolutely necessary to give you some information on the grounds of sending that message, and also of what has been doing for these three or four days.

"On Saturday, the House came to a vote, that the three papers delivered into the House by my lady Mary Fenwick, contained matters of a scandalous nature, and that the contrivance of them was a high crime and misdemeanour. They also ordered, that Smith should be taken into custody.

"Your grace will easily suppose that my lord Monmouth found himself concerned in the first of these votes, and was not idle on Sunday, and that (as is his manner) he tried all ways to avoid the censure, which must fall upon him, if this contrivance should be applied to him. But the king did directly refuse to interpose in his behalf; since which he has seemed to acquiesce, if he might come off with a censure for indiscretion, but applies himself to avoid the having the papers adjudged to be his.

"Yesterday, after the king had passed sir John Fenwick's bill, the House went again upon the adjourned debate, and my lord Monmouth desired he might examine Smith, as to several things which might make for his defence; and he spent a long time in this, but I think very little to his advantage. When this was done, the farther consideration of his business was put off till to-morrow,

he having, as he alleged, some witnesses to examine, which I fancy will do him but little service.

"The House proceeded to examine Smith, as to the original letters, and the correspondence so much talked of, and upon his oath he declared, that he never had, nor knew of any original letters or papers, relating to any correspondence with king James, nor that he knew of any correspondence with king James, carried on by any persons concerned in this government, nor that he knew who the persons were, whom sir John Fenwick had named in his paper, otherwise than by report of the town; and farther that the original letters which he had of your grace's, related only to the transaction between your grace and him, as being employed by you to get intelligence.

"Then he was asked, if he knew any thing against my lord Marlborough, or Mr. Russell, or my lord Godolphin, or my lord Bath, and he said he did not. But being asked, if he knew any thing against your grace, he said he knew nothing against you, but your ingratitude to him, for his services. This set the House a laughing, and all appeared to be ended there. But I know not how my lord Rochester, after some time, moved that Smith's papers, which he said he had left in Mr. Secretary's hands, should be sent for, and the House of Commons should be desired to give Mr. Vernon leave to attend, and also that Hewit, who was named by Smith, should be sent for. The occasion for this was given by a question asked of Smith, what his services were.

"Accordingly, this morning, Mr. Vernon did attend, and gave an account of all he remembered, relating to Smith and his intelligence, and after that, we had so ordered it, that it was well enough introduced to have my lord Portland own, that Smith had pretended to give intelligence to him, for these six weeks; and, that they might see of what consequence the man was, he was willing to shew them the letters; and they were produced and read, and relating to things, fresh in every one's memory, the impertinence appeared to the last degree, and gave every one a proper character of the man, and that his whole design was to get money.

Thereupon he was called in and examined, and owned that he

had no other intelligencer but Hewit, and that Hewit gave him that, which he pretended to be a copy of Melfort's* letter to my lord Portland; then Hewit was called in, and he swore he collected that letter out of the Penny Post,† and then they were confronted, and, upon the whole matter, made a great deal of sport for the House.

"One might have thought that this would have put an end to any farther consideration of such an intelligencer, especially after the House had been informed by the king's leave, that he remembered that your grace had several times acquainted him with the accounts you had from this fellow, and several lords declared that they remembered the king made mention of it, at the cabinet council, when he first told them of the plot. But my lord Haversham would not rest till the letters of Smith, in February last, were read. That made it necessary that the rest of the letters (which contain mere impertinences only, and a perpetual craving of money) should be read also; for those will shew how little ground your grace had to expect any thing from him, and upon this, the consideration of the matter was put off till Friday, and in the interim, the message was ordered to go to your grace.

"Some of the lords are of opinion, that the letter of the 19th of February, being very particular, has been mended by Smith in his copy, and therefore were the more earnest to see the original. That your grace may judge of it, I have sent a copy of it, which I have transcribed out of Smith's book, which he gave the king, and which the king put into my hands to read, for Smith's papers are sealed up in the House. I cannot pardon myself for giving you this tedious trouble, but my meaning is good in it. I would not only have you safe and vindicated, (which I can see no doubt of,) but perfectly easy, and I wish I may soon see you perfectly well,

* James Drummond, viscount and afterwards earl of Melfort, was secretary of state for Scotland in 1685, and attached himself to the fortunes of king James. At the Revolution he accompanied him in his exile, and was one of his principal ministers and agents abroad.

† The title of a newspaper published at the time.

that I may give you yet a more tedious account of passages, proper for you to know, though not proper for a letter."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD KEEPER SOMERS.

[For the information of the House of Lords, on his intercourse and correspondence with Smith.]

"*Eyford*,* *Jan.* 13-23, 1696-7.—My lord; having received the commands of the House of Lords, to lay before their lordships, what letters I received from one Smith, in February last; or, in case I kept none, then to acquaint the House with what I remember was contained in them; I am very sorry not to be able so fully to comply with their lordships directions, as I could wish; for having heard, long since, that this man did pretend to great merit for his discoveries, and had, on several occasions, in a very unhandsome manner, complained of me; I did then endeavour to collect what letters he had sent me, that I might judge, how his intelligence appeared, when put together, for as it came to me, I could make little of it. But I found I could retrieve so few, and those generally of an old date, (when I had more value for his intelligence than I had afterwards,) that I am almost certain I have none of those letters left, which their lordships desire to see. I shall therefore apply myself to give them the best account I can, of what he did inform me, that was most material at that time, which I am the better able to recollect, because several things he then mentioned, fell out so true, that I was surprised, how he could send them, and not more, till I understood he had his intelligence from one Hewit, a youth, that lived with major Holmes's brother, (I think,) and was, about that time, employed to wait on sir George Berkeley, by which means he had opportunities to guess, or overhear particulars, which otherwise, I suppose, he might not have been trusted with. I remember, that in the winter, Smith wrote very positively of an invasion, intended from France, which was to break out at the

* This letter has been already printed, but to preserve the chain of correspondence it is inserted here.

arrival of the Toulon fleet, and that many gentlemen of quality, and officers, were sent from St. Germains, upon that design. He named Mr. Henry Brown, my lord Montacute's brother, at one time; at another, sir George Berkeley, Holmes, Counter, and others. Then he gave hints of some great design, which he should soon discover the bottom of, and afterwards grew more particular, that it was to seize the king's person, and named Berkeley, Charnock, Holmes, Counter, and others as employed in the villany; and that at the same hour this was to be executed, a general rising was to be in all the counties of England. He was different in his accounts about the manner of seizing the king. Sometimes Mr. Latin's Lodge, near Richmond, was to be attacked, and the walls scaled by foot, whilst his majesty was there; sometimes an attempt of a like nature was to be made on Kensington House; and at other times, the king was to be set upon, going to or coming from hunting.

"Near to the day the assassination was intended, he was very earnest for money to buy a horse and equipage. Upon which I desired Mr. Vernon to talk with him, to see if he knew, of his own knowledge, any person engaged in such a design; for being never able to bring any thing in confirmation of what he asserted, from whom he had it, how he came by it, or at what time it was to be executed, I suspected either there was no truth in the story, or, if there were, I might possibly fit him out to be engaged in it. He gave Mr. Vernon no satisfaction, upon discoursing with him, but proceeded in his promises to him, that nothing could be attempted, but he would give him or me an account of it. When the whole was brought to light, and it appeared he was not enough in the secret to have prevented it; I intended, notwithstanding, to do something for him, and, at his own desire, concealed his name, to give him an opportunity, as he pretended, to apprehend Chambers. In the mean time I had an account, that in very public places, he began to threaten he would complain of me to the parliament, whereupon I thought it neither safe nor decent to have more to do with him. What I received, relating to the

attempt on his majesty's person, or the invasion, I always gave the king an account of, whilst I was in town, and able to wait on him; but being much indisposed, I had his majesty's leave to go into the country for a few days, where I remained till I was commanded back, upon the happy discovery of that horrid design.

"This, my lord, is all I can recollect on the subject their lordships are pleased to command. I beg the favour it may be communicated to the House, and am," &c.

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Proceedings and decision of the House on the conduct of lord Monmouth—His commitment to the Tower—Farther considerations on the affair of Smith.]

"*Jan.* 16-26, 1697.—My lord; Last night the business of my lord Monmouth came to a conclusion. I have not the vote by me; but the effect of it is, that, upon the depositions, it appeared that he had such a share and part in the contrivance of the *three* papers, delivered into the House by the lady Mary Fenwick, that, for that offence, and the undutiful words, which were sworn to have been spoken by him of the king, it is ordered that he be committed to the Tower, there to remain during the king's pleasure, and the pleasure of the House. They have also appointed a committee to draw up a short representation of what they have done, to the king. The thing at first insisted on, was, to have voted him the contriver; but this way was accepted of at last, as not being altogether so hard. I can hardly remember a question insisted on, when there were so few negatives; six or seven at most were the number.

"It was very late before this was over, and I did not think it proper to take notice to the House of your grace's letter, till they had finally discharged themselves of the other business. But, as soon as it was over, I acquainted them that I had the honour of a letter from you, which I was desired to communicate to the House; but they were all so weary, that they desired to adjourn till Monday, and then the letter to be read, and Smith's papers considered.

"I think I may pretend to say that last night has put a clear and satisfactory end to this business of Smith's; but Monday will determine whether I judge right. I did not know till Thursday that Smith was that infamous fellow that pretended, about five years since, to marry a pawnbroker's widow, and the next day broke open her house, and took away her goods, as her husband; when it appeared, upon examination, that he had trepanned the woman to a tavern, and made her drunk, and got one of his companions to say the words of marriage, and then went to bed to her, when she was insensible. The consequence was, that he was fined in the King's-bench, and the marriage declared null in the ecclesiastical court.

"This I have taken care to acquaint such as I thought most proper with, though I think it to be unnecessary.

"I hope the next post will bring your grace the satisfaction, that there is an end of this fellow's charge of ingratitude, which is ridiculous already.

"I am almost dead with this tedious examination of my lord Monmouth's, and have not seen the king this week; but I did take care to send him the account of sir James Rushout's pretences, as soon as your letter came to me.

"I have taken up a kind of course of being tedious, and you ought to check me, lest it should grow to a prescription. I am," &c.

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Decision of the peers on the communications of Smith—Full vindication of the duke of Shrewsbury—Impatience of Monmouth in his confinement.]

"*Jan.* 20-30, 1696-7.—My lord; This morning has put an end to Smith's business. After the report from the committee, which was little more than the pointing to the particular letters, which were thought most to deserve a remark, with some observations that were kindly enough made, by my lord Rochester (who was the chairman,) the House came to *two* votes, to the effect following:

"That Smith, upon his examination, having alleged somewhat in the nature of a complaint against the duke of Shrewsbury, upon account of some intelligence given by him to the duke, which he said would be made out by his papers, given into the House; the House was of opinion, upon examination and consideration of the papers, that there was no ground for the complaint; and, upon consideration of the whole matter, the House was of opinion, that Smith did not deserve any farther reward.*

"The first of these questions was proposed by my lord Wharton, the second by my lord Rochester.

"I think I ought to confess to your grace that, how little soever this thing is in itself, yet I know the dependence of it was an uneasiness to your grace; and, therefore, I am guilty of desiring Mr. Vernon to send the account of it, by a particular messenger, in which opinion my lord Wharton did entirely agree with me.

"The whole of this transaction has succeeded entirely according to the desires of those who meant your service; and if it has not been right in any thing, it must be attributed to their mistake; for I did not see but that what we aimed at we had. These two votes passed without any question put, and, I persuade myself, will be to the full satisfaction of every body without doors; the malice and design of the whispers and insinuations which were spread abroad, being now much more the discourse than those whispers themselves did ever give rise to. I will not pretend to enter into the particulars of this matter, and how much a fool and a knave Smith appeared; but I will mention a turn that was generally given to the thing, that Smith was resolved to be in on either side, as the success was: he would be a discoverer, if

* Smith was not discountenanced by this repulse; for he still continued to importune the king and ministers with his menaces and solicitations; and was secretly encouraged by many who were hostile to the duke of Shrewsbury, or desirous of embarrassing the affairs of government. Hereafter we shall find him re-appearing on the stage, and again claiming the notice of parliament.—See chapter 9, note to the letter from lord Somers, Dec. 16-26, 1699.

the assassination failed; and would have had a horse for the service, if it succeeded.

"I am not able to tell your grace how my lord Monmouth bears his imprisonment: some say, beyond measure impatiently; some qualify it; but all agree, my lady has no bounds in what she says. He has sent me a letter, wherein he desires leave of the king, that he may petition the House. I returned answer, that I should not see the king till to-morrow night, and was so ill, that I did not know if I could go to Kensington then. He sent me word his desire was, I would send the message by somebody else, and thereupon I told my lord Portland of it. This quick proceeding is, as I think, like all the rest. What it will produce I know not. My lord S————* was to visit him on Monday, and my lord Portland yesterday, but I do not hear what either of them said, though I believe you guess that cannot be a secret long.

"I wish your grace the full restoration of your health, and am most entirely," &c.

The letter from Mr. Vernon, to which reference is here made, enters more into detail, but contains nearly the same in substance, as this from the lord keeper Somers. One remark, however, deserves to be submitted to the reader.

"For my part, I expected the matter should have held a long debate; and, perhaps, not gone off so cleverly at last. But the malice, folly, and insincerity that Smith shewed yesterday, at the committee, turned almost every body against him. I thought my lord Normanby and lord Haversham would at least have given some obstruction: but the first went away, observing no disposition of the House to dwell on this business; and the other said nothing, having nobody either to lead him into it, or to second him."

* Sunderland.

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Congratulates him on the decision in Smith's business—Inquires whether lord Sunderland is authorised to declare his willingness to accept the post of lord president—Commends the conduct of lord Rochester.]

"*Jan.* 25-*Feb.* 4, 1696-7.—My lord; I shall not take up your time, in saying any thing of the malicious business, that was set on foot, in order to prejudice your reputation, and some of your friends, knowing you have had a very particular account of every step of that matter. But since it is come to a conclusion, and I think such a conclusion, that we could not wish or desire any thing more to be done, than what has been, our enemies have had the opportunity of exposing themselves and malice, and our innocency does with more brightness appear. I am not partial, being a party concerned, but I find all people of the same opinion. To the best of my remembrance, in some former letters, I told your grace that lord S————* had often talked to me, that in the summer, you had told him, you could not serve in the place of secretary; he has very often, since this business has been on foot, repeated it to me, and that he was sure you would not serve in that office, had not the affair been upon the stage; and that, therefore, his thoughts was for your being president, and that he was sure that would please you, being a place of less trouble, attendance, and clamour. If I am not taking too great a liberty, in asking questions on this matter, you will oblige me in letting me know, whether he has wrote to know your mind, otherwise I must wonder at his taking upon him, so positively to know your mind; and since his practice in the world gives one just reason to believe he has a design in what he says and does, so it ought to make every body upon their guard, to prevent mischief. You will easily guess at my troubling you in this matter; and you will, I fancy, conclude with me, that by his never naming who is proper to succeed you, in case you resolve to remove from one place to the other, that he

* Sunderland.

has somebody in his thoughts, that to some people will not be very agreeable. Possibly I may be out in my suspicions, but, if I am, there is no hurt done, since it goes not farther than to yourself and lord keeper.

" What I have farther to say, is to beg of you, as I have done in a former letter, that you will not come to any resolution with yourself, till you have seen your friends, and heard their opinions, whether you will stay in the place you have, remove into another, or quit the service. Those are things, as matters now stand, as nicely to be well considered, before you resolve, as it is possible to imagine; and though I know your own judgment is much superior to any you can talk with, yet considering what has happened, they are most proper to lay every thing before you, for your consideration. I therefore beg, you will give me leave by your next, to satisfy some of your friends, who are afraid of your taking resolutions in the country, that will be impossible for you to alter afterwards, though you see cause.

" I despair of seeing you here till the weather sets in to be warmer, nor would I advise you to attempt it, till you are past the danger of being thrown back by a relapse, that may hold you a great while. I have taken the liberty to tell lord Rochester I had your orders to return him your thanks for his friendship and justice. I concluded you would approve of this, since I was the man he made that compliment to, when this business was first talked of, and indeed his behaviour has been very gentleman-like. Several others would have been glad of occasion to shew their teeth; most of them I believe you expected ill from. I shall never be able to tell you how much you are obliged to lord keeper, whose thoughts, zeal, and application exceeded the strictest rules of friendship and service for you, all which I know you are truly acquainted with.

" I have troubled you with a long letter, but, if I have said nothing you disapprove of, I hope you will pardon me, for taking up so much of your time, especially since it proceeds purely from the service I have for you, which I will, on all occasions,

demonstrate, as becomes a man, that is most faithfully yours," &c.

"This letter was wrote yesterday, but did not send it, in expectation I should be honoured with one from your grace; but, since I have not any, I hope I have done well in what I said to lord Rochester. It is agreeable, I suppose, with what you have wrote to him."

CHAPTER 4.

1697.

New plot of lord Monmouth—Account of his connection with Brown, the highwayman and informer—Ministerial changes, and arrangements in favour of the whigs—Somers appointed chancellor, and Montague first lord of the treasury—The whigs attempt to secure the promotion of lord Wharton to the office of secretary of state.—Opposition of the king—Conduct of Sunderland, and embarrassments of the duke of Shrewsbury—Machinations of Price, Chaloner, and other informers—Correspondence from January to September, 1697.

BESIDES the affair of Fenwick and Smith, which created so much uneasiness to the duke of Shrewsbury, we find his anxiety awakened by a new plot.

While lord Monmouth was confined in the Tower, he received a notice from the king, that his name was struck out of the privy council, and that his place in the bed-chamber would be disposed of. This disgrace deeply affected his haughty spirit; and to Blackland, an agent of lord Sunderland, who visited him in confinement, he expressed his resentment at the severity with which he was treated. He solemnly denied the accusation of his disrespectful behaviour toward the king, and testified his surprise, that his majesty was not satisfied with his explanation. He farther disavowed any improper motive, towards either the duke of Shrewsbury or Admiral Russell.

While he was thus irritated at his disgrace, and brooding in solitude over his projects, his fertile brain conceived a new plot, still more singular than that which had already failed. He took advantage of an adventure, which was not uncommon at that period, when the laws were too weakly administered, to restrain the licentiousness of the depredators, who swarmed in the vicinity

of the capital. A short time before his imprisonment, he had been attacked near Chelsea, in his way to his house at Parson's Green, by a gang, who stopped his carriage, and plundered him of his hat, peruke, and six shillings in money. Perceiving them to be above the vulgar class, he expressed his regret at their desperate courses, and requested information by what channel he could present them with a gratuity. Most of the robbers, who were men of respectable connections, were struck with his generosity, and instantly restored their booty, except the trifling sum of money, which he refused to receive.

Soon afterwards one of the party paid a visit to his lordship. The name of this man was Brown. He was an Irishman, of respectable parentage, who had originally served as an officer in the army, and had afterwards entered as a student at the Temple; but, being reduced to necessity by the forfeiture of his father's estate, who was a Jacobite, he had gained a precarious and dishonourable livelihood by gaming, fraud, and robbery. Lord Monmouth expressed his surprise at this proof of hardihood; but, admiring the spirit of the man, he made him a trifling present, encouraged his visits, and met him frequently, and privately, at different places. When employed in the project, which he had attempted to execute by means of Fenwick, he selected this desperado, as a fit agent for an underplot. He endeavoured to persuade Brown to appear, and declare, that the design of the gang with whom he was engaged, in the robbery at Chelsea, was to seize and carry off his lordship to France, where he was to be held as a hostage for lord Aylesbury, who had been recently committed on a charge of treason. With the same mischievous ingenuity which Monmouth had shewn in the case of Fenwick, he furnished Brown with written instructions, and dictated letters, which he was to address to several of the ministers. He also lured him with the hopes of a considerable reward, both from the crown and from himself; and added threats of prosecution and punishment, if he hesitated to forward his scheme. In the interim, another of the footpads, named Davies, was engaged in the same plot, and, being imprisoned for another robbery, was assiduously

visited both by Monmouth and Brown, in Newgate, and tutored to serve so nefarious a purpose, by his testimony.

During his seclusion, the mortified peer conceived the design of bringing forward this project, as the means at once of redeeming his own character, and proving that he was persecuted by the Jacobites. Brown, however, either from compunction, or the hope of indemnity, hesitated to undertake the part assigned him, and disclosed the plot to colonel Talbot, the nephew of sir John Talbot, with whom he had served in the army. It was communicated to the ministry by sir John Talbot himself, and a day appointed to take Brown's examination, by the lord keeper; Mr. Vernon, from delicacy to the duke of Shrewsbury, declining to interfere. Monmouth was apprised of the expected examination, and is said to have manifested great confusion; but Brown, from fear, or some other motive, did not make his appearance, though he affected to have some mysterious secret, which he should be enabled to disclose. Through sir John Talbot, he requested a promise of security, in case he should appear, and stated, that lord Monmouth had sent his mistress, to induce him to quit the kingdom, by threats of a prosecution, offering, at the same time, to procure him a passport for that purpose, under a feigned name.

At this juncture, Brown was arrested, by a warrant from the secretary of state; but, from a tenderness which some of the ministers felt towards lord Monmouth, his examination was delayed, under various pretences, till, at length, it was taken, through the instances of the lord keeper. In this inquiry, he described his communications with lord Monmouth, and gave a detailed account of the plot in which he was to have been engaged. The disclosure, however, greatly embarrassed the ministry; for they were reluctant to act on such grounds, against a nobleman who was already in disgrace; and yet fearful of exposing themselves to the accusation, that they had smothered the discovery.

After some delay, Brown was liberated on bail, rewarded with occasional gratifications; and endeavours were used to induce him to quit the kingdom, that he might not, by his confessions,

aggravate the disgrace of lord Monmouth, whom the king was desirous to spare, for the services he had rendered at the Revolution. The informer, however, acquired additional audacity, from the attention which he attracted; and continued to embarrass the ministers and the duke of Shrewsbury, by his threats and importunities, till the interest he had excited was lost in that of more important transactions. He finally fell into such contempt, that we cannot trace his subsequent adventures and fate.*

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Dissuades him from returning to town—On the singular behaviour of lord Monmouth and his connexion with Brown.]

"*Jan.* 26-*Feb.* 5, 1696.—My lord; I had the honour of your grace's letter last night, and am very glad to hear that you have found no prejudice by your attempting to ride; but I am altogether of your grace's opinion, that you ought not to venture rashly upon a journey, till the weather be milder, and till your health does appear to be in some sort confirmed, lest it should prove fatal.

"I will deal freely; I think if there were not so much danger as really there is in removing, yet you should not do it at present, for people might make a construction as if you could have come sooner if you pleased; and the king, perhaps, be brought to believe, what has been all along insinuated to him, by a certain lord,† that it was not your illness which detained you at *Eyford*. What designs and schemes that lord has now on foot, I am absolutely a stranger to, which, perhaps, your grace is not. However, being no better informed than I am, I hope your grace will determine nothing till you come to town, more than just to enter upon business, in the same manner as if you had never been absent one day. Mr. Russell and I have often talked on this subject, and we agree so entirely in it, that I am persuaded we are

* This account is drawn from Mr. Vernon's letters during the year 1697; from the letters and examinations of Brown himself, and from those of sir John and colonel *Talbot*.

† Probably lord Monmouth.

in the right. The business of sir John Fenwick, and that of Smith, is so perfectly well over, that nothing but somewhat arising from yourself can raise the least thought of them again.

"As to my lord Monmouth, his discourses are so very various, and, if those were of the same tenor, his resolutions are so changeable, that what he will do must be left to chance. His main business is to get out of the Tower, and, in order to that, he is ready to do any thing. But I do not find the king is willing he should come out so soon: I suppose, because he doubts that he will not take the removal from his places very patiently. Amongst the other strange parts which he has been acting, he has been dealing with one Brown, (who, it is said, was one of those who set upon him on the road,) to swear he was engaged to carry him off to France. I thought I had put this matter into a way of being made appear to the world; but it did not succeed, and I am sure your grace will forgive me, for being more than ordinarily cautious how I have any thing to do with such sort of creatures. It would be too long to tell you the particulars of this transaction.

"I shall trouble you no farther than to wish you perfect recovery, and that you may bring your friends some hopes of it, when you come to town."

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the proposed mission of sir James Rushout to Portugal.—The king prefers retaining Mr. Methuen.]

"*Feb.* 6-16, 1696-7.—My lord; On Thursday night I pressed the king to let me know his determination, as to the affair of Portugal, and he told me, that he could not agree that sir James Rushout should go. He said Mr. Methuen had made some progress, in relation to the demand of a sum of money, due to England from Portugal, and that all which he had done would be lost, if a new person was sent. He added, that when he sent a minister into Italy, he would be willing sir James should go; but I was sufficiently cooled by the first part of what he said, to pretend to profit by the latter, and, therefore, said nothing to the mention of Italy; and, had it been otherwise, I would not have

pretended to say any thing in it, because I did not know but your grace might have placed your thoughts upon some other person for that country. I told sir James Rushout of what the king said, and I did not find but that he would be enough disposed to go to Italy. But I proceeded not to say any thing to him, but that, when your grace comes to town, that matter will be best concerted.

"I hope you mend a-pace. We hear you do, and, therefore, I think your grace ought not to delay too long your coming to town"

ADMIRAL RUSSELL TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Censures the conduct of some nobleman—Promises to be guided by the duke of Shrewsbury in his demeanour towards him.]

"*Feb.* 11-21, 1696-7.—My lord; Your grace's letter of the 10th* came this night to my hands. I am not a little surprised at what you wrote me, not having, in any kind, given the least reason to ground such a story. I believe that lord's name† has not been mentioned by me this two months, and when I did, it was far different to what you have been writ to; therefore, your grace may, with great safety, answer for me, that I shall not shew the least ill will or dislike to him. But, at this time, we are so full of tricks and designs, that a man ought to walk with great precaution, lest the malice of one's enemies does not bring a man upon the stage; but I am above their malice, and scorn their friendship, if they would give it. But certainly, what you say comes from the old hand at roguery,‡ in order to fright him. I suppose he is, or will be, better advised. You may depend upon my doing just as you would wish, and, therefore, when you have occasion to write to the person, that gave you this account, my answer will be agreeable with what you have promised for me. I am glad to hear you mend, and I hope this thaw will not make any alteration for the worse. We do extremely want you. I

* This letter is missing. † Probably lord Sunderland.
‡ Probably lord Monmouth.

know you have motives enough to bring you to town so soon as your health will permit. I am sure nobody will more heartily rejoice to see you here, and in health, than," &c.

LORD KEEPER SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Examination of Brown.]

" *Feb.* 20-*March* 2, 1696-7.—My lord; After a great many delays, and with a good deal of difficulty, I got Mr. Secretary and my lord chief justice last night to my house, where we examined Brown. He has been a great while in custody, and I was very uneasy at the thoughts that he might have been tampered with; for, from the first time I heard of this fellow, and what he pretended, I have not been without apprehension, that some mischief might come from such a dark business. But I think I may now send your grace word, that we have gone so far in the examination, that no hurt can come to any body but the person himself, who (if Brown says true) would have tempted him to have turned a design of robbing the lord, to a design of carrying him into France, at the instigation of some great persons. I cannot send the particulars at this time, and perhaps it is not of much consequence; but I will write more largely about it, when I see the deposition, which is now putting into writing. I have had no little task to bring it so far.

" On Thursday, the king told me, he had writ to press your grace to hasten to London. I hope this very fine weather will not only tempt, but enable you to venture upon a journey, for you were never more wanted.

" I was unwilling to write sooner, because I could not, till now, send you any account of Brown; but, if I had troubled you with any letters, I could not but have said, in every one of them, that your absence is a great uneasiness to us all."

Soon afterwards lord Monmouth was liberated from the Tower, and experienced the same attention from the king as before. In fact, from a fear of irritating his restless and enterprising spirit, or from some other motive, he was remunerated for the loss of his

offices, by the private grant of a pension of 2000*l.* a-year. He long retained his enmity to the duke of Shrewsbury; for we find many traces, in Mr. Vernon's papers, of an attempt, as late as 1699, to revive some of those accusations, of which sir John Fenwick had been made the agent. The subject, however, appears to have become so trite, that it attracted no public notice; and the turbulent peer received no encouragement to renew his malicious and unjust attempts.

In 1697, lord Monmouth succeeded to the title of earl of Peterborough, which devolved on him, by the death of his uncle Henry, the fourth earl, and by this title he is more generally known.

In this collection we find no letter, either to or from the duke of Shrewsbury, during the interval between February and May, 1697, and, therefore, have no means of tracing his conduct and views, except from a few scattered hints in the papers of Vernon. The period, however, was extremely critical, as great changes were now rendered necessary in the administration, by the retirement of lord Godolphin, which left a vacancy at the head of the Treasury board; by the death of sir Charles Porter, one of the lords justices of Ireland; by the expected dismission of the duke of Leeds, lord president of the council, who was menaced with an impeachment, on the imputation of receiving bribes from the East-India company; by the resignation of the earl of Dorset, lord chamberlain; and by the expected retreat of sir Stephen Fox and Mr. Smith from the Treasury, the first, because he was disappointed in not being placed at the head of the board, and the second, from resentment at the king's supposed coldness towards the whigs. Other changes in the inferior branches of the Excise and Customs were also expected.

In this predicament the king, as usual, consulted lord Sunderland, who, though without a responsible office, was his confidential counsellor, and was so anxious for Shrewsbury's advice, that he prevailed on him to repair to court. The result of the duke's audiences was, however, unsatisfactory, as we find from the letters of Mr. Vernon; and, it appears, he was disappointed in his efforts to promote the cause of the whigs; for he complains

of the reserve of the king, and hints at the coldness with which many of his representations were supported by Sunderland. In fact, he abruptly retired from Windsor, to Woburn, and evinced a decided reluctance to any farther interference. One of his letters, addressed about this period to the lord keeper, and preserved in the Hardwicke state papers,* is submitted to the reader, as throwing some faint light on the causes which had occasioned his disgust:—

"*April* 14-24, 1697.—My lord; I am extremely sorry for your lordship's indisposition, but hope it will not prove so troublesome as a quartan ague often does. My lord Sunderland and I were attending on the king when your letter came. His majesty discoursed with us on the several heads we had formerly mentioned; but deferred coming to any resolutions till your lordship could be present. The naming a deputy, or deputies, for Ireland, was the first point considered. Lord Sunderland named only my lord Villiers, and it had as quick a negative. Then, I perceived, he looked upon me, and expected I should name my lord Wharton. I paused some time; but, being pressed by the king to name some person, I said I had two in my thoughts; the first, I knew was very desirous to go, had very particularly deserved well of his majesty, and was in great straits in his fortune, and that was my lord Winchester. The second, I was confident every body would agree to be fit, but I could not be sure how agreeable it would be to his inclinations, and that was my lord Wharton. The king objected to my lord Winchester's qualifications, but agreed to the other arguments I had used for his being qualified; but wished it might be done some other way. Lord Sunderland agreed entirely with the first part of his majesty's discourse; but he said not so much as I expected to the second.

"Then the king came to consider my lord Wharton, and spoke of him with very particular kindness and esteem; but he could not imagine he would be easy in being one of the three; that he

* Vol. 2, p. 429.

was sure, when he reflected my lord Capel had been alone, it was impossible he should, even though at this time it might satisfy him, yet that thought would change him; and, said he, 'my lord Wharton has very good parts, but I think no more of his liking to be one of the three in Ireland, than I should to have two joined to me here.' No resolution was taken on this point. But I said, I thought my lord Wharton might be tried how it would please him; so that I think that affair is in a posture to receive what turn shall be thought fit to give it.

"Mr. Wharton was agreed to be in the Admiralty, without difficulty, and Mr. Pelham in the Treasury. Some objections were made by the king to Mr. Montague's being first in the commission, but not long insisted on. Then his majesty acquainted us, there would be one vacancy more, if not two, at the board; Mr. Smith having asked an audience of the king, and told lord Portland he was resolved to resign; and the same was expected from sir Stephen Fox, though nothing lately had been said of it. We, being unprepared to offer others for the Treasury, were directed to consider further of it. Then his majesty said, some alterations were necessary in the Customs and Excise; and particularly named sir Robert Clayton,* as one who neither attended the board, nor encouraged his service in the city, by loan or subscription; and, upon that occasion, declared, that several had so behaved themselves this session, that, if no punishment were made, no government could be expected for the future; and said, this must not be extended partially to one kind of men, but some should be displaced of different denominations. In general, I agreed with this; but submitted, that a distinction was reasonable to be made, between persons who had done wrong only once, through ignorance, and those who, in the whole course of business, had continually opposed.

"This argument met with so cold a reception, that I think it is not hard to guess what was meant by that speech; though, I

* Afterwards well known as lord Sundon, and husband of the favourite lady of queen Caroline.

think, if it be intended against sir Walter Young and Mr. Clarke, we are obliged (I am sure I think myself so) to stand by them.

"This sort of discourse naturally brought on that of my lord president, &c. and I was surprised to find how easy the king was in parting with him and his consequences. He said, the whole family of the Berties were against him, and declared himself not satisfied even with the vice-chamberlain, but lord Sunderland excused him. I perceive all that, as to the vice-chamberlain, is so prepared, that it may be done as is thought best.

"I have given your lordship this long account, because a meeting will very soon be pressed by my lord Sunderland. It were very convenient, your lordship, Mr. Russell, Mr. Montague and myself could have half an hour's discourse first; but how possible that is with your other business must be submitted, by, my lord," &c.

It is not difficult to perceive, that the chief embarrassment alluded to in this letter, arose from the dread which the king entertained of the preponderance of the whigs, and in particular from his unwillingness to raise to any office of trust and influence lord Wharton, whose domineering spirit he sufficiently characterises in his remarks. This aversion was secretly fortified by Sunderland, who, though he favoured the whigs in general, and had pledged himself to support their interest, did not venture to oppose the prejudices of his royal master, by unequivocally recommending the appointment of Wharton.

The difficulty which attended all attempts at an arrangement, was increased by the decided resolution which Shrewsbury had manifested to resign, for his office of secretary was coveted by Wharton; and the king, who could not tolerate that over-bearing peer, even in the distant post of joint governor of Ireland, was not likely to consent to admit him to an office, which gave him constant access to the royal person. To avert this dreaded change, no effort was spared to retain Shrewsbury in the administration. He was first offered by the king the post of lord chamberlain, recently vacant by the resignation of the earl of Dorset; and afterwards in-

direct overtures were made by Sunderland, to induce him to accept the presidency of the council. On the other hand, he was no less strenuously pressed by the whigs, to forego his intention of retiring; from the conviction, that he was the chief bond of union, which preserved the strength and consistency of the administration.

At length, after much hesitation, a species of compromise was effected. Shrewsbury consented to retain the seals, till his place could be filled, to the satisfaction of all parties; and the whigs were partially gratified, by the favours conferred on some of their chiefs. On the 22nd of April, Sir John Somers was appointed lord chancellor, with the promise of a peerage, the grant of the two royal manors of Ryegate and Howlegh, in Surrey, and a pension of 2100*l.* out of the fee-farm rents of the crown. Montague was placed at the head of the Treasury, retaining the chancellorship of the exchequer; and admiral Russell, created earl of Orford, permitted to enjoy his two posts of first lord of the admiralty, and treasurer of the navy, and nominated one of the lords justices, in the absence of the king. Lord Wharton received the lucrative office of lord chief justice in Eyre, on this side of the Trent, and his second son was introduced into the commission of the admiralty.

After some time, the duke of Leeds was suffered to retain the presidency of the council; and the government of Ireland was vested in the marquis of Winchester, lord Galway and lord Villiers, as lords justices. The favour of Sunderland was also publicly announced, by his appointment to the post of lord chamberlain. He was nominated a privy counsellor, and one of the lords justices. Sir Stephen Fox and Mr. Smith were pacified, and consented to remain in the Treasury. This arrangement, however, proved the germ of dissension. The whigs were provoked by the want of zeal, which Sunderland had evidently manifested in behalf of their views, and, particularly by his suspected opposition to lord Wharton; and, from this period, we trace in their letters, the increase of that decided antipathy to him, which was soon aggravated into an open feud.

With these explanatory remarks we resume the correspondence.

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The magistrates of Plymouth oppose the appointment of general Trelawney to the command of the Plymouth militia.]

"*May* 15-25, 1697.*—My lord; if Mr. Vernon had not told me that I might write sometimes, without any great trouble to your grace, I would not have ventured, though the occasion be such, which induces me at this time, that it deserves and needs your help.

"I find by sir Francis Drake, and all our western friends, that the news of major-general Trelawney's coming in, to be lieutenant of the militia of Plymouth, puts such a damp upon them, and his being in that employment, will be so fatal to them, that what your grace has helped to do, in getting their charter, and all which has been built upon it, in that part of England, (which is considerable,) will be utterly lost. The militia of Plymouth has been settled, the same men are in the magistracy there. This encouragement has given such a life to that party, that, notwithstanding the diligence and violent temper of the bishop,† if a new parliament be chosen, it will appear to have a great effect. But, if I am truly informed, the magistrates of Plymouth will not only lay down, but will leave the place, if the militia be put under Trelawney, and, though they should not do so, there will be a continual war between the civil and military power. How absurd this is, in the thing itself, and how unlucky influence so ever it will have in that part of England; yet, if there be no remedy for it, it must be acquiesced in, as other things are. However, I thought it fit to be represented to your grace, and since I have run out so far upon this occasion, I will put an end here, with adding only my most sincere wishes for your perfect health."

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Illness of the lord chancellor—Wishes for his presence.]

"*London, June* 3-13, 1697.—My lord; I did not intend to have

* This letter, though on a subject of comparatively trifling importance, is introduced, to shew the extreme jealousy which agitated the two contending parties.

† Sir Jonathan Trelawney, brother to the general.

troubled you so soon, but we hear so much of your health, and good intentions, that I cannot but congratulate both, which I do, at least as heartily as any man in the world.

"My lord chancellor is very sick, so you may imagine whether we want you; but I will not enlarge upon that subject, it being contrary to the rules we agreed to.

"I hope Ath will be the uttermost of the french efforts on this side of the world, and then I believe this campaign will make no great change.

"I am with great sincerity and respect," &c.

LORD ORFORD TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the attempts of lord Sunderland to mediate a reconciliation between the persons accused by Fenwick, and lord Monmouth.]

"*London, June* 10-20, 1697.—My lord; I have so much considered your grace's ease and quiet, that I have not followed my own inclinations in writing often, though I had nothing to say, but to assure your grace, how much I am your servant, and how happy I wish you in all respects. For news, if I knew any, you would have it more exact from Mr. Vernon's pen; and the state of your health, he does me the favour to tell me, so that my writing would only draw from your good nature, the trouble to you of answering my letters.

* * * * * * *

"I know a man makes a very ill compliment to his friend, in going about to dissuade him from what he has most inclination to; and, therefore, I will shew myself a good courtier, in saying very little on the subject you closed your letter with, 'in continuing still at the labouring oar;' though all mankind that has the honour to know your grace, as I do, for their own sakes, and their country's service, must wish you to continue at that oar, where you will always shew how justly you deserve the opinion the world has of you. I have often heard it said, mankind was not born for themselves, but for the good of their country: it is a doctrine I do not agree to, therefore will conclude on this subject. If I can guess, by a great

man's* behaviour, at what he hopes to bring about before winter, it is to make a perfect reconciliation between your grace and your friends, with a certain lord,† who has justly deserved your anger, or rather disdain. That peace-maker, who values himself on that talent, thinks he fools me, and I am contented he should believe it for the present. Should I make you as many excuses as I ought, for troubling you with so long a letter, I should fill another sheet of paper, but, to avoid that, I will conclude, with what you shall upon all occasions find me to be," &c.

It has been already observed, that the king, on raising lord Somers to the office of chancellor, conferred on him a pension out of the fee-farm rents of the crown, and the grant of two royal manors, for the support of his dignity, which his private fortune was too scanty to maintain. This gift, however, was opposed by the earl of Portland, who advanced pretensions to the fee-farm rents, in virtue of a prior promise, or grant. The question created considerable embarrassment, and Shrewsbury evinced his friendship, by interfering, to reconcile their jarring pretensions.

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Difficulties with lord Portland, about grants from the crown.]

"*June* 15-25, 1697.—My lord; your grace's letter, coming at a time, when I was ill of a violent and dangerous fever, was not delivered to me for a great while. As soon as I was in a condition to read it, I resolved, the first time I was able to use a pen, it should be in expressing the great sense I had of your obliging condescension, in allowing yourself to think of my concerns, and in requiring me to acquaint you, how the grant, which the king once intended for me, stood at this time, that you might endeavour to remove the objections.

"I am sure I ought to obey you, since you require it, though otherwise, I should not have had the confidence to have troubled you with a long story of a thing of this nature.

* Lord Sunderland. † Lord Monmouth.

"Your grace can give the best account how the king came to think of giving any thing to me. But, after the king had agreed upon what Mr. Montague had represented to him, that if I could find any ungranted fee-farm rents, I should have them, my lord Portland was acquainted with it, and to make the charge easier to me, consented that tallies should be struck in the privy purse; and did not only do other things of this kind, but sent his servant Smith to me, to advise me as to the manner of my proceeding. For all this I gave him thanks, in the best manner I could. The king signed the warrants, and the contracts were going forwards, till Mr. Vernon's return from Margate. Your grace knows the messages which he brought. I confess I was somewhat surprised, but I should have been far from being troubled if I had been so lucky to have seen Mr. Vernon, when he called upon me, on Wednesday, which might have prevented what was put in the Gazette, the next day.

"I sent word to my lord Portland, that, if he had given me the least hint of disliking what the king had been doing, or that he had any farther thoughts of fee-farm rents, he would have done me a favour, more valuable than any thing, which I had a prospect of gaining by the grant. I also wrote to the king, that I had put a stop to all proceedings, not knowing any other way to comply effectually with what I understood, by Mr. Vernon, to be his pleasure, and which I perceived I had mistaken before, as apprehending that he told me such a grant would not interfere with any purposes of my lord Portland.

"Some time after this, I had a letter from my lord Portland, in which he seemed very earnest, that my grant should go forward; but, by comparing what he then wrote, with what I had heard from Mr. Vernon, I found his meaning to be, that I should first find out some good rents for *him*, and afterwards, if any were left, I might take them for myself. Thereupon, I sent him word, that I was obliged to him for desiring me to proceed in perfecting my contracts with the Treasury, if he was willing I should retain to my own use such effectual rents, (if there should be any such,) as should be comprised in those contracts; but if he did expect that I should assign any of them to him, to make good such

rents as were comprised in his grant, and had not proved good, I did much rather chuse to sit down as I was, than to be at a great expense, in passing grants, and at a much greater in gratifying agents, who must be employed; and to be at the trouble of soliciting, and being obliged, and, after all, to have nothing but the name of a bounty from the king.

"My lord chamberlain told me, that my lord Portland wrote to him, complaining that he thought I was angry with him, and had sent him a copy of his letter to me, and (as I believe) of mine to him. I did tell my lord chamberlain that I meant and desired him to tell my lord Portland, that I was not so unreasonable as to take it ill from him, that he did not quit any thing in which he thought his interest concerned, upon my account: since which time, and during my sickness, I received another letter from my lord Portland, which, that your grace might apprehend it the better, I have sent inclosed.

"I am now to beg a thousand pardons for this tedious story, and I do desire your grace not to suffer any favourable inclinations, which you may have for me, to induce you to do any thing, which is not entirely proper in your own judgment; for I do most seriously protest, I am extremely at ease in this matter, and can hardly tell whether I ought to wish it to go forwards or not.

"Give me leave to add one thing, (because the king sent word, by Mr. Vernon, that what was wanting should be made up hereafter;) Mr. Montagu told the king, that, besides Richmond, (which he was not willing to give away, and, I think, with very good reason,) and these rents, there was nothing remaining, but some of the queen dowager's lands, the particulars of which he mentioned to him. The only valuable part of those, the king, before he went away, gave to D'Allonne.

"Having been sick so long, I do not know what is become of Mr. Palmes; but I saw him the day after the great storm, and, if he did not mis-inform me, that matter might have been set right, without giving him any wound, or occasioning any loss to the king.

"It is not possible for me to tell your grace, how very glad I am that your health improves so much.

"I dare say you are of opinion that I do, above all things, desire your return to London. But yet, I cannot forbear putting you in mind of the danger of entering upon business too soon, and cautioning you against presuming too much upon your strength.

"I have a monitor about me; for, with writing this long scribble, my head aches so, that I can scarce see to write that I am, with all possible respect," &c.

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Renewal of the attempt to implicate the duke in the affair of Fenwick—Examination of Price.]

"*Sept.* 4-14, 1697.*—My lord; I was not willing to give your grace the trouble of a letter, in acknowledging the honour of your's of the 28th of August, till some more steps were made, in the examination of that affair, which was necessary to be brought to some issue immediately. I suppose Mr. Vernon acquainted you with what manner the ridiculous story was received by the lords.†

"I do very well remember your grace's telling me of the two considerable persons you were endeavouring to intercept, upon intelligence that they were going to France; and that, afterwards, you said, you thought one of them would be taken with a post warrant in his pocket; and this I thought fit to declare immediately upon the reading of the letter of sir H. C.‡

"The archbishop also called to mind the concern your grace expressed upon Kitson, the messenger's, intercepting sir John Fenwick, lest it should prevent the two persons being taken, of which he was one.

---

* For an account of the machinations of Price and his associates, see part 1, ch. 8, p. 172. And also the duke's letter to the king, Sept. 8, 1697.

† The information contained in these letters will be found in the narrative of chapter 8, above alluded to.

‡ Sir Henry Colt.

"This day we have spent six hours in examining Price, and the others, taken up upon his examination.

"I think it was very happy that no time was lost, in driving it to a conclusion; for, though it appears, very plainly, that some people were drawn in by him, and looked upon him as one employed to go to France; yet we have direct proof against him of his endeavouring to impose on us, by making his man write letters, which he was to deliver to sir H. C.; and we find him to be in the hands of Chaloner, Roberts, and others, who, perhaps, were capable, in time, to have brought this to a notable business.

"Price is in custody, and so is his man, and Porter, Gibbs, and Gargrave, Horsnall, and Lewin.

"Mrs. Scott is not taken, which I am sorry for. Roberts and Lansfield are sent for. Chaloner is committed to Newgate, upon the coining act, he having been dabbling at it, since the recommendation of the House of Commons, which falls out well.

"I will trouble your grace with no more particulars at present, because Mr. Vernon will write at large; but you may depend upon it, that this malicious design, as to your grace, must prove entirely abortive, and cannot be worthy another thought of your's.

"I shall say nothing, as to the indignation, which such an attempt must necessarily raise in you at first, nor will I at present trouble you with my poor opinion, of the use which you seem to think it fit for you to make of it. I shall only add, that you will have a farther account of this examination from me by Tuesday's post, if it turns to any thing, which may deserve to be mentioned.

"I heartily wish the restoring of your health, and am, without reserve," &c.

LORD ORFORD TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the conduct of sir H. Colt—Is glad his scheme is defeated—Thinks it might otherwise have created trouble in parliament.]

"*Sept.* 7-17, 1697.—My lord; I hope your grace will believe me so much your servant, that I need not take up much of your

time to assure you, what degree of concern I lay under at the ill news Mr. Vernon tells me of your health. I wish you would have been prevailed upon, before you left London, only to have had some other doctors discoursed with sir Thomas Millington, of your distemper. I see, by the letter lord chancellor received from you, you have some thoughts of going into a warmer climate: wherever you go, my sincere well wishes shall always attend you; and if you think my prayers may be of service, they shall not be wanting. As to the noble design* sir Colt has been in quest of, I know you are particularly acquainted from Mr. Vernon, therefore, will only say it was very happy it appeared so early; for, though the matter is as foolish as false, had it lain working till the meeting of the parliament, under the management of those, that I believe are at the bottom of it, God knows what work they would have made for a month at least. But now, I think, it can do nobody but themselves any hurt; though I really think they have drawn in two or three of these foolish and zealous Jacobites, to trust them with enough to endanger themselves, but we shall make an end of it in two meetings more.

"As to the peace, I believe you do not like the delays, unless you know more of the secret than I do. I swear I dread this breaking. I have flattered myself with the hopes of being quiet at least for a few years, and that I might please others, by my leaving all public business, as I am sure it would myself.

"Monday, I am told, we may expect lord chamberlain. I hear lord Wharton is in town, but have not seen him. I have troubled you too long, and will, therefore, conclude with assuring you of my being, with the utmost respect and service," &c.

* The affair of the informer, Price.

CHAPTER 5.

1697.

Irksome situation of the duke of Shrewsbury, in consequence of the malicious insinuations of Price and others—Offers to resign—His resolution strongly combated by his friends—New attempts of the whigs to obtain the seals for lord Wharton—Preparations for assembling the parliament—Shrewsbury persuaded to retain the seals—Sudden resignation of sir William Trumbull, and appointment of Mr. Vernon, as secretary of state—Resignation of lord Sunderland—Correspondence, from September to December, 1697.

THE accusations of Price and his associates, however frivolous and unfounded, did not fail to aggravate the uneasiness of Shrewsbury, notwithstanding the kind sympathy of the king, and the earnest representations of his friends. In fact, at this period, he suddenly resumed his intention to withdraw from office; and, without any previous intimation to the whig chiefs, again imparted his wishes to the king, by his letter of September 8th.* This step he at the same time communicated to Somers and Orford, repeating the same reasons for his determination.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS.

[On the accusations of Price—Has taken the resolution to resign.]

"*Grafton*,† *Sept.* 8-18, 1697.—My lord; By your lordship's of the 4th, and by Mr. Vernon's of the same date, I have received an account of the continuation of your kindness, by the pains you have taken in examining this business, which is an accusation so impossible and ridiculous, that, before it be thoroughly inquired into, I am well satisfied it can, in no manner, nor in any

* See the correspondence with the king, part 1, chapter 7.

† A seat belonging to the duke of Shrewsbury, in Worcestershire.

place, reflect upon me. However, since it is a proof I am the mark to be aimed at, by such fellows, and their abettors; and that I must not expect to be quiet in this, or any other employment of trust or credit, in the government; it is much better for me to take this occasion of my ill health to retire, which is so justifiable a pretence, that, by the last post, sir Thomas Millington writes me these very words: 'I need not now repeat the cautions 'I have so often given you, concerning the treacherousness of 'your distemper; your own experience is sufficient; and, since 'this last relapse, I cannot reasonably hope, that you will be in 'a condition to bear the town the next winter.'

"I shall, therefore, take his advice, and, if I do not go beyond seas myself, settle myself so entirely to a country life, that, by the grace of God, I will not see London of many years, unless it should be thought so necessary for me to wait upon the king myself, to resign the seals, that the inconveniencies and danger of a long journey could not excuse me. I have writ to his majesty by this post, to acquaint him with my resolution, and have nothing now in debate with myself, but whether it be more proper for me to stay in the country, or go beyond seas: the first is most with my inclination, and the second, I believe, would be more convenient for my health; but I would govern myself in this, as might have the best appearance to the king and my friends."

This sudden and unexpected resolution equally mortified and perplexed the whig chiefs, who flattered themselves that, through his interposition, they should finally vanquish the objections of the king to lord Wharton. The chancellor, on receiving from Mr. Vernon the letter, announcing his intended resignation, peevishly exclaimed, that the duke put the matter beyond deliberation, and complained that so peremptory a step had been taken, without that previous notice, which he and his colleagues had been led to expect.* In fact, both he and lord Orford delayed, for several days, to reply to the communication; and,

* Mr. Vernon to the duke of Shrewsbury, Sept. 16, 1697.

when they did reply, they employed every argument to persuade their noble friend, that he ought not to consider his purpose as absolutely fixed.

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Earnestly dissuades him from resigning—The falsehood of Price's accusation too palpable to make any impression to his prejudice.]

"*Sept.* 16-26, 1697.—My lord; I have not acknowledged the receipt of your grace's favour of the 8th, so soon as I ought. My lord Orford and I have had many discourses upon the subject of that letter, which you cannot but think gave us trouble enough. But we could not well determine in what manner we should write, for as, on the one hand, it seemed hard to pretend to combat a resolution, which you expressed to be so much fixed; so, on the other hand, we were both of a mind, that we should not be just, if we did not deal so clearly with your grace, as to say we thought you in the wrong, in taking such a resolution, as well as in giving the king an account of it, before his return.

"The impertinent and frivolous story of Price was known to be absolutely false, by the archbishop and myself, before it was inquired into. The thing itself is, to the last degree, absurd and impossible, and the fellow is detected of having endeavoured to impose upon the Justices; and sir H. C. himself is satisfied he was ill-used and imposed upon by Robins, who recommended Price and Chaloner to him, as honest men, and fit to serve the government; whereas, if Price be to be credited, as to Chaloner, or he, as to Price, there cannot be worse sort of men. I think, therefore, it being detected, that this matter moved originally from one,* who had such a hand in the management of Smith, formerly, your grace should look upon the mentioning your name by Price, as a lucky thing, rather than as an occasion for your retiring. Besides, the peace being now made, it is reasonable to think, that, in whatsoever post you like best to continue, there will be more ease for you,

* Lord Monmouth, now lord Peterborough, who was suspected of being the instigator of this machination.

so as you may be allowed to favour your health; and Kensington, or Chelsea, or any other place, which you may like better, may do altogether as well as if you fixed yourself in town.

"I have promised you not to be troublesome with my importunities, however strong my inclinations are, and how clear soever my opinion is, that you should continue in business; but I cannot help saying, I think it would be very wrong for you to go abroad at this time. I think, whenever you part with the seals, you should yourself deliver them to the king. And the reason of my thinking so is, because I remember the doing it otherwise, was blamed in your grace, the last time. Give me leave to add, that I think a sudden resolution, taken up, without the concurring opinion of any of your friends, ought never to be looked upon as so fixed, but that you should allow them to be heard upon it. My lord Orford says, he will write to your grace this day, and will endeavour to persuade you to this.

"My lord chamberlain is come to town; and my lord Orford and I told him of your letter to us, and of your intent to write to him, to the same purpose, and I suppose you will hear from him by this post."

THE EARL OF ORFORD TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Has communicated his intention of retiring to lord Sunderland—Concurs with the chancellor, in dissuading him from his purpose—Advises him to deliver the seals in person.]

"*September* 16-26, 1697.—My lord; I have not troubled your grace with any answer to your letter of the 8th, believing it was necessary to obey your commands to lord Sunderland. This morning I told him your resolutions, and that you had written to the king, and designed the same to him, so soon as you knew of his being come to town. He was very much surprised and concerned at the news, and told me, he was resolved this night to write you his thoughts upon the matter. He might have spared his desiring me to write, for I was resolved to offer my poor thoughts to you, so soon as I had talked with him. I had done it before with lord chancellor, who, I suppose, has wrote to you. He is concerned at

the resolution you have taken, but is under some doubts, whether you will not believe his advice to you for staying in, is more out of consideration to himself, than your own ease and satisfaction. I have several times, in company, begun the discourse of your ill health, and that I found you would not be able to come to London, and, consequently, not possible for you to serve the public. It was, in all places, received with trouble, which may serve to shew you how desirous people are to have you in business. I, that know your mind, do not know how to offer arguments to you, that will not seem to look like flattery or self interest; but as to the latter, I can be little concerned in it, though I flatter myself with your friendship, since I conclude the king has a good inclination to be rid of me, and if so, I am sure you conclude our white staff will readily run in to give me a mortification, which I do positively resolve not to bear. From these reasons, your grace will believe the advice I shall offer, proceeds purely from a design to serve you, without the least regard to myself; therefore, not to take up too much of your time, a peace is concluded, which will put it out of the power of those villains, who study mischief and destruction, to hurt honest men, at least to any degree to trouble people. As for this foolish plot of sir Henry Colt's, I think it has been so well managed, that, whenever it comes to be talked of, it will so redound to your credit, as to shew the world there are some cruel-minded men, that have, if possible, a mind to prejudice your reputation; and, for the future, whatever they may say, will be so taken, and receive no manner of countenance, even from sir Colt.

"Should you continue in the resolution of quitting, I really think it will not be by any means with a good grace, to send the seals by any hand to the king, but to give them with your own compliment to him. This I find lord chancellor and lord Sunderland concurring in, and therefore, in my poor opinion, if your health will in any degree admit of it, I should wish you would see the king when he comes first over. You have so often reproached me, for pretending to advise you to do what is not easy to you, that really I am afraid to tell you what I think, that you should continue, if you can bring yourself to it with any satisfaction; but if not, do not pre-

judice your own health, to gratify any one, or all your friends. But if you can bring yourself to be easy in this, or any other employment, it will be a pleasure to all your friends, but to none in a more particular manner, than to, &c.

"Whatever you resolve upon, as to staying or going, I find you will be blamed, if the seals are given by any other hand than your grace's."

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Rejoices at the peace, and at the conclusion of Price's affair—Thinks this accusation cannot affect his grace.]

"*London, Sept.* 16-26, 1697.—My lord; I met upon the road with the good news of the peace, and I find it has made this a new world. I always thought it would have a very good effect upon men's minds, but I could not have believed what I see, if I did not see it.

"I have, since I came, been acquainted with the fine plot the lords justices have been troubled with, since I left them, which they are tired with, and will, I think, rid themselves of very soon. What has been said of you is so absurd, and so demonstrably false, that it is not worth saying any thing to you of it, which I hope you will believe, and that I would not deceive you. I am sure I do not intend it, when I tell you that I am extremely concerned, that you are still troubled with a shortness of breath, though I cannot imagine it to be so ill, or so dangerous, as sir Thomas Millington tells you. Let it be so, not to argue with him, who ought to know much better than I.

"All your friends hope you will meet the king at his return, and not leave him, or them, till they can once speak with you. I hope you will not refuse them this. Chelsea, or Hyde park, is as good air as Worcestershire, and your health cannot be hazarded by coming for a few days to one of those places.

"I hope you will forgive this trouble, and believe that no man in the world is more really than I am," &c.

The meditated resignation of the noble secretary, renewed the crisis, which had occurred at the commencement of spring. As it

was foreseen, that the whigs would resume their efforts to obtain the seals for Wharton, Sunderland, who even in the preceding winter, had cast his eyes upon Mr. Vernon, to succeed in the post which would be left vacant by his patron, communicated his purpose to him, and earnestly pressed him to accept the office. Nor was he moved by the reluctance of Vernon himself, who felt so strongly the peril of the obnoxious and dangerous post, that he observes to the duke of Shrewsbury, "I had better do as Temple did, fill my pockets with stones, and leap into the Thames.*"

The duke of Shrewsbury imparted, in strict confidence, this proposal to the lord chancellor alone; but, though he foresaw the feuds, which were likely to ensue for the reversion of his office, he persisted in his purpose. He, however, consented to repair to London, and deliver the seals to the king, in compliance with the instances of his friends, who hoped, by personal remonstrances, to attain the end, which they could not gain by their epistolary representations.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND.

[Rejoices at the peace—Complains of mental and bodily incapacity for business—Persists in his intention to retire—Will repair to town to resign the seals.]

"*Grafton, Sept. 22-Oct. 2*, 1697.—My lord; I have, for this last year, thought the peace would be generally very acceptable It is extreme pleasing to these counties, and I am glad to understand it is the same in town. I confess it is the most welcome news to me, that I think I ever received.

"I waited your lordship's coming to town, to acknowledge a former letter I had from you, with an enclosed of my lord Portland's, which I now resume, and to acquaint you with a resolution, which I perceive my lord chancellor and my lord Orford have discoursed with you about. I know, generally, men are so ill judges of what concerns themselves, that I shall not be positive I am in the right; but, in my case, there are so many concurring circumstances, to persuade me that I am, that I declare it will be very hard to alter

* Vernon to the duke of Shrewsbury, Sept. 16, 1697.

my purpose. My inclination has always been to lead the life of a private gentleman, and a small mortification is sufficient to disgust me from public employments; for I cannot think it reasonable to make a struggle and be uneasy, to preserve what I should live much happier without. But, above all, my ill health has made my body and my mind wholly incapable of the care, thought, or attendance of business. It is a great satisfaction to me, that I shall retire at a time, when his majesty's affairs are in a better posture, than they have been for some years; and I heartily wish, that he and those about him, may enjoy happiness and advantage, from a lasting peace.

"Since it is your lordship's opinion, that I ought necessarily to come to town, I shall only now desire to know, when you think it most proper; for I would not willingly continue there long."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS.

[On the same subject.—Complains of being exposed to the calumnies of spies and informers.]

"*Grafton, Sept. 22-Oct. 2*, 1697.—My lord; I have received your lordship's of the 16th, and will not contest but you may be in the right, and that it is great weakness and folly to leave an employment, and the world, when peace has put a cheerful prospect upon our affairs, and ease and quiet may be probably expected. But I must, at the same time, freely confess to you, that I have taken such a disgust to all public business, that it is become almost an antipathy, as unreasonable to the full, and as hard to overcome. It is therefore in vain for any body to argue with me, or for me to argue with myself: my temper carries me away, and I would much rather not live at all, than lead a busy, unquiet life. If my health were as good as it has been, I might possibly master my inclination, as I have formerly done; but that being weak and uneasy, my humour is grown froward, and much fitter to be concealed than exposed.

"This being the true state of my mind, your lordship can do no greater act of friendship, than to assist me to come off with the king and my friends, in such a manner, it may not be resented, as proceeding from disrespect, or disaffection; but from a perfect inability to serve, partly of body, and partly of mind, though my heart and good wishes are ever constant to the same cause and

interest, which I shall endeavour to promote, in the little sphere I design to move in for the future.

"Since your lordship thinks it proper I should come to town, I shall submit to the hazard and inconvenience of the journey, and, though it should cost me a relapse into my bleeding, I shall not think that price too dear to pay a decent respect to the king; I beg only to know the time you would have me be there. But I must observe, that if I was blamed for not personally delivering the seals, the last time, it was very unjustly; for I carried them four or five times, and would have left them in his majesty's closet, but he still positively commanded my taking them back; so they continued for some days in my possession, without my acting, till at last I was seized with so violent a fever, that nobody thought I could live,* and, when the king went for Ireland, was too weak even to turn myself in my bed, and, of a month after, could not walk the length of my chamber. My lord Portland knows, that when he came to speak to me upon that subject, he found me almost speechless, and so weak, that he confessed he did not expect I had been so ill, and, going away, forbore troubling me, out of mere pity.

"As for Price, I never was concerned at the information itself. It happens luckily that the contrary can be proved several ways, insomuch, that if Roberts and ten more had sworn it, I might have been suspected to trepan sir John Fenwick; but, to design to effect his escape, and yet suffer him to go where I knew he would be apprehended, are too great impossibilities. And now, Roberts's testimony, and the manner the whole thing has been examined in, by your lordship's justice and kindness, has cleared that beyond dispute, let the first invention light where it will.

"But it is very unpleasant to find that one is the subject of these fellows' malice and villany, and, indeed, unsafe, if they have got the secret they pretend to, of counterfeiting hands, or washing out part of a writing and filling it up, leaving as much of the rest to remain as they see they may make convenient; sign passes and

* See page 16.

orders, and what they please for me, whose name has necessarily been subscribed to so many several papers as run abroad.

"I will conclude this tedious letter, with repeating my request to your lordship, that you will help to disengage me from this condition of life I am so extreme weary of, and unfit for. I shall take it as a very kind and considerable addition to those many obligations you have already laid upon," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD ORFORD.

[Will deliver the seals to the king in person—Declares his aversion to public business.]

"*Grafton, Sept. 22-Oct. 2*, 1697.—My lord; I have received your lordship's of the 16th, and since it is thought absolutely necessary that I must come to town, will wait upon you there for a few days, about the time of the king's return, or, at what other you shall think most convenient, though I hate the journey, not only for fear of a relapse, which I have good reason to apprehend, but, for the importunity I shall meet with from twenty people, that one cannot argue with, because, upon so nice a subject, one must not speak one's mind. I should be very cruel to make your's or my lord chancellor's suspicion reasonable, that I could mistrust your advices of self-interest. I have had too sure a demonstration of your two friendships to be jealous of either of you for such a part. But, as men, in the counsel they give to themselves, regard their own inclinations too much, so their friends are apt to consider them too little. You certainly advise right, in the common acceptation of the world, who will never think obscurity so valuable as I do; and, I know the way I am taking is not the method to be rich or great. But spleen and ill health have so much increased my natural fondness to retire, and my aversion to dependance and restraint, that I am no longer capable of this course of life; and, to be in business, with my present infirmities of body and mind, would but expose me more than formerly; therefore, dear lord Orford, help me to my liberty, and it will be the kindest thing you can do to," &c.

LORD ORFORD TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Is glad he has resolved to deliver the seals in person—States that he will be much pressed to continue in the service, particularly by lord Sunderland, of whose motives he suggests suspicions.]

"*London, Sept.* 24-*Oct.* 4, 1697.—My lord; I am not able to tell your grace whether I am glad or sorry at the resolution you have taken, in coming to town at the king's return; for, as I shall be extremely glad to see you, and think, if you are able, it is right to see the king, and to deliver the seals to him; so I should be as much concerned, if any ill accident should attend you, by the journey, as to your health. What you seem to apprehend of the application that will be made to you by numbers of people, to continue your employment, will certainly happen; nor can you wonder at it, since those that are your friends will think themselves doubly concerned, as to yourself and themselves. You know so well my thoughts, that I need not trouble you with a repetition, for I swear, without any regard to myself, I would have you do what may, in your own opinion, contribute most to your present and future quiet and satisfaction. I think your stay or leaving business, does, from your friendship and kindness to me, more particularly affect me. I shall always abandon my own interest to the satisfaction of a man I profess so much service and honour for, as I do to your grace; and, though I will never press you to do what you so much dislike, you must prepare yourself to withstand many solicitations from your friends and acquaintance; and, by what I perceive, lord Sunderland does not doubt of your being prevailed upon to continue in business. Whether his desire in this matter is a real kindness to you, or otherwise, I will not pretend to determine. It is not unlikely that, before you think of coming to town, I may learn some news fit for your knowledge, which I shall acquaint you of; for I would be glad you were fully apprised of matters here, when you come up to town. I have nothing more to add, but that I am, with the greatest respect," &c.

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Desists from withstanding his desire to resign—Mutual accusations and villany of Price and Chaloner.]

"*Sept.* 25-*Oct.* 5, 1697.—My lord; I had, yesterday, the honour of your grace's letter, and am very much satisfied with your resolution of coming to town, if your health will admit. I will never be uneasy to you with my importunities, and, as my opinion can have but little weight, at any time, so I will never be so impertinent to press it to your disquiet. I am too sensible myself of what it is to be perplexed with business against one's inclination, and with no good health, to be very unreasonable in another man's case. But what my sense is of your grace's retiring, with respect to yourself, to your friends, and to the public, I have troubled you with so often, that it need not be repeated.

"The time of coming to town, in my lord Orford's wishes, as well as mine, should be, at least, some days before the king comes hither.

"We have sent to the Treasury Chaloner's accusation of Price, and Price's accusation of Chaloner, and what other informations we have got against either of them, about counterfeiting exchequer bills. This day Price told us that Chaloner had sent him a letter, which he shewed us, in which Chaloner pretends to tell Price how kindly he carried himself, upon his being examined, *with* respect to him; and desires to know how Price behaved *himself*, when he was asked about Chaloner; and says, if they can come to a right understanding, he will put him into such a way as shall bring them both off, in spite of all things. We were desirous to see if any thing can come of this, and have consented that Price should write to him, to learn the meaning of it, if Chaloner will send it to him, in writing, under his own hand, otherwise, we told him, it would not be regarded.

"The fellow is in a great fear, and knows how villanously Chaloner has spoken of him; and, I am apt to think, will set his wits to work to draw this secret from Chaloner, in hopes to make

his own case better. It is not impossible but this may lead us to a discovery of who set these people on work.

"I have only to add my heartiest and sincerest wishes for your health," &c.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Announces the time of the king's return.]

"*London, Oct.* 19-29, 1697.—My lord; The king having named the first day of November for his embarking, he will probably be here soon after, and your friends and servants hope you will be here some days before him. Every thing that relates to the public looks very well, and I wish most earnestly your health may allow you the share you ought to have in its prosperity, being most truly," &c.

For above a month, affairs continued in this uncertain situation, the whigs caballing to obtain the seals for Wharton, and Sunderland publicly affecting to favour their wishes, though secretly yielding to the prejudices of the king, and pressing Mr. Vernon to accept the office. Shrewsbury, in the mean time, persisted in his intention to resign; but was prevented from repairing to town, to deliver up the seals to the king, either from a relapse of his complaint, or from a desire to avoid the importunities of all parties. On the 23rd of October, Vernon thus describes the state of this political cabal:—

"I suppose you will now be thinking of drawing towards the town. You are coming into a strange intricacy. My lord chamberlain, in some companies, declares for my lord Wharton, and knows there is no such thing intended. My lord Wharton shews a willingness to accept it; and, at the bottom, has no mind to it; or, as your grace foresees, will soon be weary of it. Your grace will be vehemently pressed to stay in, and you resolve against it.

You know one* is secretly designed for secretary; and he is utterly incapable of it. What will all this end in at last?"

In one expedient alone all parties seemed to concur, namely, the continuance of Shrewsbury in the administration, either by retaining the seals, as secretary of state, or, by accepting the office of president of the council, which was expected to be vacated by the duke of Leeds. Indeed, the whigs were particularly anxious for this species of compromise; because, on the meeting of parliament, when the arrangements for the peace were to be taken into consideration, it was currently reported, that the tories would offer large sacrifices for the purchase of the royal favour. This opinion is strongly expressed in a letter from *lord* Orford, dated October 21-31, 1697:—

"My lord;—I have been so few days in town, that I am not able to send your grace any account how the world goes; but I find endeavours are used to persuade the whigs, that if they are not willing to do the king's business, as it is called, in the parliament, the tories are resolved to bid for the king. How far this way of talking will prevail, to make them zealous or backward, is hard to guess at present; but I found, by the few that are in town, that one party of people expects and prepares to be ill-treated. I do not much trouble myself about the matter, not caring how soon they are rid of me; but I resolve to do it *my* own way, and not to gratify those who I know underhand are *my* enemies. I was spoke to last Tuesday, by lord Sunderland, to write to your grace to come up as soon as you can; but *really* I had so violent a pain in my head, I was not able; and, *now* I do obey his commands, I must ask your pardon for my presumption, in pressing you to do what I am sure you are the best judge of. The king will certainly be over, if the wind permits, by the beginning of next month; so that, if you come, to be in town before he comes, you must be here next week.

* Meaning himself.

"I find, by some, it is taken for granted, if the king has a mind you should, that you will remain with the seals all the winter, so that you may be at liberty to be in the country, as you please. This I find you will be pressed to consent to. I know this will please the whigs, that if they cannot prevail with you, to continue, they may have time to fix another, that may be a friend of their's, though I steadfastly believe no such shall have the seals. Lord Wharton has been thought on, and I have had some discourse with him of it; but he does not frankly declare himself to me, nor do I believe, if he comes to have a mind to it, others will approve of his being in that place, however consenting they now seem. I know you have long considered this matter as to yourself, and after hearing you express your dislike to that degree, it would be the height of impertinence in me to press you to what I know is so much against your inclinations, nor will I say any think on the subject, till I have the honour of seeing you. Only this far I may say, that if you could bring yourself to endure the place, I should be rejoiced at your stay, though, I believe, I shall be the first of your friends that leaves the court; but, as to your coming to town, I should think your being here, when the king comes, will have the best grace; and this your friend lord Sunderland longs for, that matters, as he calls it, may be adjusted, before his arrival. I will not trouble you more at this time, than to assure you of my being, with the greatest truth and respect," &c.

We have no documents relating to the interval, which elapsed, before the beginning of December, during which time the king landed in England, and arrangements were made for assembling the parliament. Doubtless, however, the same struggle continued, and the difficulties increased, in consequence of the expected discussions, relative to the terms of peace, and the extent of the military and naval establishment, which the king was desirous to maintain. As the crisis therefore approached, the anxiety of all

parties was raised, and, by their joint importunities, the partial consent of Shrewsbury was extorted, to retain the seals for a yet farther period.

In the midst of the importunities, with which he was assailed, a new turn was given to the contest, by the sudden resignation of sir William Trumbull, the other secretary of state, who had offended the whigs, by the doubtful part which he had taken, during the examination of Fenwick and the other informers. Whether his retreat was, as he alleged, occasioned by the mortifications which he experienced from the lords justices, or, whether he resigned to avoid his dismission, cannot be determined; it is at least certain, that this change was little expected by those who were most deeply interested in a new arrangement. On this occasion the same vigilance as before was shewn, to baffle the hopes of lord Wharton and the whigs; for, Sunderland executed the design he had long meditated, by overruling Mr. Vernon's unwillingness to accept the office.

The particulars of this occurrence are best explained in the words of Vernon himself, to the duke of Shrewsbury, in a letter dated Dec. 2, 1697.

"The thing I have so long dreaded is fallen upon me, and so suddenly, that it hath been impossible for me to make any applications, or use any means to ward it off. Mr. secretary Trumbull resigned the seals yesterday, upon what motives I know not, only, in general I hear he hath been troublesomely uneasy of late, and the matters he complained of, I hear, were levelled at the lords justices; that he had been treated more like a footman than a secretary, and had been sent to for blank warrants, which was about the men Price accused, and that I had countersigned something belonging to him, relating to the separate article of the treaty. I know not what that should be, unless it were the warrant for affixing the seals, which my lord chancellor expected for his justification, and he was out of town when it was dispatched.

This is told me by Mr. Van Huls, sir William having laid open his grievances to my lord Albemarle, that he might make them known to the king.

"I heard not a word of his being removed, till this morning, that my lord chamberlain told me of it at the Office, adding, that the king would acquaint the cabinet council, which was to meet after sermon, that he intended I should succeed. He took as much notice of what I could say to the contrary, as he used to do formerly.

"When the cabinet was up, my lord Portland, told me the king had declared his intentions, and directed I should attend him at Kensington, at eight this evening. I came now from thence, and am unhappily loaded with the seals. I said all I could to excuse it, that his majesty might understand my weakness and unfitness, in a truer character, than I am afraid hath been given of me, and when that could not be admitted, such as I must submit. I could not meet with my lord chancellor, or lord Orford, before I went (they being at my lord Romney's), to have desired their interposition. I saw them only just as the council rose, and they gave me joy, with such pleasant countenances, that I believe the matter was very new to them. I cannot but think the manner of coming in, is as unaccountable as the rest. God knows I have little joy in it, and would infinitely rather have preferred your grace's service, which by your goodness, I could sooner hope to give satisfaction in, and have more reason than ever to beg you will not withdraw from me your patronage and protection; and be pleased to think, when the time comes, how to make my fall easy, for meteors raised on a sudden, were never designed to last long."

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Is surprised at the transfer of the seals from sir William Trumbull to Mr. Vernon—The whigs recommend lord Wharton, and are offended by the arrangement, but acquit the duke of Shrewsbury of any share in it—Presses him, if he resigns, to recommend lord Wharton—Suspicious of lord Sunderland's interference.]

"*Dec.* 9-19, 1697.—**** My lord; I own myself to have been

very much surprised at the change of secretaries, though, the minute I heard the first was out, I concluded who would be his successor, from what your grace had formerly mentioned to me. We have all of us endeavoured to convince my lord Wharton, that we had not the least notice of this change, and I think he believes it; but I will not fail to tell him, when I see him next, how much your grace was surprised at the news, and how absolutely ignorant of the thing.

"I have been confined to my chamber for a week, upon account of the stone, or gravel. Last Tuesday night, my lord chamberlain, my lord Orford, my lord Wharton, and Mr. Montague came to my house, upon my lord chamberlain's appointment. The design of the meeting was to communicate your grace's letter to him, and to tell us what he was to write to you, by the king's direction. We all wished that might prevail with you, but could not but think the case was altered since your going out of town.

"In conclusion, he had ordered it so, to have it proposed, if you were immoveable, who was to succeed; and it was easily agreed my lord Wharton was the man to be desired. From all, I conclude, that if you are determined, unalterably, to give up the seals, either it is settled in favour of my lord Wharton, or directly the contrary; and all this is a grimace, to let him see what that other lord's* wish is, though he could not prevail.

"If you will allow me to guess, I shall do it upon a very ridiculous ground. But my lord Tankerville having been named of late, with much praise, by that lord, and upon the first news I had elsewhere of the quitting of one, and the choice of another secretary; and the reason given, amongst others, that the new one was the only proper person in the House of Commons, though others might have been thought of in the House of Lords, and of those, my lord Tankerville being named first, I dare say he has been the first thought of, though he may not succeed.

"I should be very glad to go along with your grace's inclinations in serving Mr. Walsh, in any of his pretensions."

* Lord Sunderland.

The letter from lord Sunderland, to which an allusion is made by the chancellor, is here subjoined, with the reply; both of which will serve to shew the anxiety as well of the king as of the whigs, to retain the duke of Shrewsbury in the administration.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Has laid his offer to resign before the king, who desires him to delay it, and is pleased with his inclination to accept another office.]

"*London, Dec.* 7-17, 1697.—My lord; I laid your letter before the king, thinking it the best way of serving you, as you desired; but his majesty is very unwilling you should yet part with the seals, and has commanded me to let you know as much; and that he earnestly desires you will keep them as long as you intended, when you went out of town, leaving it to you to make use of them as you shall think fit. He ordered me also to tell you, that he is extremely pleased with what you write, of serving him in another employment, which I wish you, with perfect health and happiness, being most truly," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND.

[Urges him to solicit the king again for leave to resign—Will retain the seals some time longer, in obedience to his majesty's commands—Declines accepting another office.]

"*Eyford, Dec.* 11-21, 1697.—My lord; I have received your's of the 7th, and am out of countenance to give you so much trouble; but, continuing still very uneasy at being charged with the care of an office, that I am sensible is not at present supplied with persons, capable of doing the duty of it, I cannot but renew my request, that you will consider yourself in my case, and, if you think I have reason, that you will so represent it to his majesty, that I may have leave, rather to resign now, than to continue longer. But I submit the whole, first to his majesty, and next to yourself; and, if it be any inconvenience to the king's affairs, am content rather to suffer, than be the least occasion that they should; but I can hardly imagine that possible, because already all the world looks upon me as out.

"As to another employment, my ill health, and temper, neither

incline me, nor make me fit for any. I have no relish for power or riches, but am convinced none can be happy who set their hearts on either. I am grown fond of the diversions and retirement of the country, and have lost some other passions, that have formerly reconciled me to the town. These being sincerely my thoughts, nothing could dissuade me from immediately pursuing them, but those obliging, kind commands, which his majesty was pleased to lay upon me, and which I will obey, if my health, and other circumstances permit. But this being an act, rather of obedience than choice, I desire it may be understood that, when I am out of the secretary's place, I shall not be so in haste to be in another, that I need put the king to the least inconvenience, to make a vacancy for me, but shall be as ready, at all times, to attend his person, his counsels, or serve him in any other manner, he shall think me capable of, not being in a place, as if I were in one. If this end in the manner I wish and propose, I shall esteem myself happy; but, let the event be as it will, I shall ever acknowledge your kindness, and be most kindly," &c.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The king is pleased that the duke of Shrewsbury will continue to keep the seals.]

"*London, Dec.* 16-26, 1697.—My lord; I have laid your letter of the 11th of December before the king, who is extremely satisfied with it, and continues to desire you will keep the seals; and does believe you will receive no trouble or inconveniency from it, on any account whatever. I need not tell you of any kind things he said, for you know his favour and esteem for you, best of any body."

The appointment of Mr. Vernon disconcerted the whig chiefs, who saw the promotion of lord Wharton rendered still more remote than ever; because he could not now be forced into office, without the resignation of Shrewsbury, which they deprecated as earnestly, as they pressed his appointment. Indignant, therefore, at such an unexpected frustration of their hopes, they became

still more irritated against Sunderland, to whose machinations it was justly attributed.

He was accordingly assailed in parliament, as the corrupt and secret adviser of his royal master; and every incident of his former life was vigilantly scrutinised, for topics of accusation and reproach. In particular, his conduct before the Revolution was severely arraigned, and invidious charges were urged, that he was betraying and ruining the present, as he had betrayed and ruined the former sovereign. He was at the same time held up to public odium, as the chief adviser of the unpopular attempts, which were now made, to obtain the consent of parliament, to the maintenance of a standing army; and threats were even used, of addresses to remove him from the king's presence and counsels. In the midst of these multiplied attacks, he was not only abandoned by the whigs, but exposed to the secret machinations of Wharton and his adherents.

The king himself, indeed, condescending to mediate in his favour, made a personal application to lord Wharton, and on his cold and repulsive denial, even solicited the interference of Shrewsbury. But all these efforts failing, Sunderland was terrified with such overwhelming attacks, and as the only expedient to escape an impeachment, resigned his office, to the extreme reluctance of his royal master.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.*

[Has resigned his place of lord chamberlain, which he desires the duke to accept.]

"*London, Dec.* 28-*Jan.* 7, 1697-8.—My lord; I believe you will not wonder that I have laid down the place of chamberlain, you have known too much of my thoughts upon that subject; but the king, as I am told, desiring extremely you would take it, as a place of no constraint, and yet near him, I cannot but hope you will comply with him. I do, from my heart, wish it, with all the

* This letter is referred to in lord Portland's letter to the duke, January 7-17, 1698, in which he notifies the desire of the king that he would accept the office of chamberlain.—See the correspondence with the king, chapter 8, page 180.

earnestness imaginable, and if the perfect friendship I have for you could contribute any thing to persuade you to it, I should be extremely pleased with it, as being fitted to your circumstances."

The extraordinary incident, which the principal actor thus briefly imparts, is detailed, with all its concomitant circumstances, in a letter from Mr. Vernon to the duke, dated Dec. 27-Jan. 6, 1697-8.

"I make the more haste to acknowledge the honour of your grace's letter of the 25th, because I would not delay acquainting you, that my lord Sunderland would not stay to be addressed from court, and, therefore, last night, he delivered up his key and staff. He was with the king about a quarter of an hour, before the cabinet sat, and when he came out of the closet, he took me down to his lodgings, and said he had pressed the king he might resign, not being able to bear any longer the life he had led. That the king did not think fit he should leave his key there, but gave him leave to put it into my hands, which he accordingly did, cutting it off from his side.

"When I came up stairs again, I found those were not the directions, but what he would absolutely do; for the king would not have the key thus delivered, much less through my hands, and when the cabinet was up, I was sent to him to Erles-court,* to desire he would take his key again, but he would not endure to hear of it. I begged only he would suspend his resolution till next day, that he had spoke to my lord chancellor, who had not then been at council, acquainting him, that the king had told it to my lord Orford, who very much disapproved of what he had done. He was unalterably fixed to hear no more of it, and never to meddle with that, or any other public employment. I put him in mind that he would give contrary advices, to those who were as uneasy in their employments, as he might be; and since he did it in consideration of the king's service, whether the same considerations ought not to prevail on him,

* The seat of his friend Mr. Guy.

when the king found himself in such distress, by being forsaken of those, whom he placed the greatest confidence in, and I hope whatsoever disgusted him might be made easier. He said it was not on account of the parliament only, that he came to this resolution; for he had otherwise led the life of a dog, having done all that was in his power for the service of a party, whom he could never oblige to live easily with him, or to treat him with common civility. He came out with one expression, which I shall never mention, but to your grace, that there was no rack like to what he suffered, by being ground as he had been, between lord Monmouth and lord Wharton. As soon as it was out, he recollected himself again, and said he would not have opened himself so far, to any body but me. Your grace, therefore, will please to keep his secret, if it be one; he added the troubles he had undergone with the e—— of P——,* only for the service of your grace and my lord Orford. I put in a word then, and said the e—— of P—— would now let himself loose again, remembering what he had told to my lord Portland; but he slighted, saying, what can he do or signify?

"The king is very much concerned at his going off: he hath been pressing for it these three Sundays, successively, and all endeavours used to turn him from it. The king finds himself in great want of some he may be free with. He doth not see he hath any but my lord chancellor, and he hath business that keeps him from attending as often as it would be necessary.

"I cannot but be concerned at these changes, and do not see what good consequences they can have. This was certainly an able and an active man, and, I believe it was not impossible to remove the jealousies, that were taken up on both sides. How far he will act hereafter, behind the curtain, I know not; but his inclinations, I fear, are wholly turned from any thing that may be called a whig.

"I must tell your grace, in confidence, that I believe my lord Wharton wishes to see that staff in your grace's hands, and I am sure it cannot be in better, and what all people ought to be satisfied

* Earl of Peterborough.

with, if any thing can content them. But I do not like the manner it comes to be made void, and I should be glad first to see, what is to ensue upon it, and how this news will be received by so many divided interests. We are coming upon a ticklish point, which is the keeping up a greater number of forces, than the parliament seems yet to intend. I am afraid our safety requires it, and if it cannot be complied with, we shall find ourselves in a very ill condition, more ways than one. If we are possessed only with the imagination of future danger to our liberty, we shall fall into some fatal crisis.

CHAPTER 6.

1698.

Parliamentary proceedings on the military establishment— The ministry unable to prevent the reduction of the army to 10,000 men—Dissatisfaction between the king and the whigs— Attempts to effect an accommodation, by the promotion of Wharton as secretary, the appointment of Shrewsbury as chamberlain, and the admission of Sunderland into the privy council—Application of both parties for the mediation of Shrewsbury—Ineffectual meeting at Newmarket, between the king and the whig chiefs—The whigs refuse to coalesce with Sunderland—Endeavour to strengthen their cause, preparatory to a new election—Project for a new East India Company, carried through the House of Commons —Dissatisfaction of the king on his departure to Holland—Continuation of the correspondence, from January to July, 1698.

THE effects of the feuds in the cabinet, were deeply felt in the parliament, even before they were rendered public, by the resignation of lord Sunderland.

Perhaps, at no time, could such a misunderstanding, among those who directed the helm of state, have been more fatal than at this particular period. By the distresses of the country, the king had been reduced to sign an unfavourable peace with France, at the moment when the decease of Charles the second, king of Spain, was hourly expected, and when a new contest was likely to arise for the spanish succession. He deeply felt that such an accommodation was nothing more than a temporary pause in hostilities; but he trusted that the zeal, which the british nation had invariably manifested, for its honour and independence, would induce the legislature to maintain such a force, as might suffice to repel the aggressions, which the king of France was evidently meditating.

He had not, however, sufficiently calculated on the strength of party feeling, nor on the jealousy which the nation fostered against a standing army, in time of peace. In such a situation it was

doubly incumbent on him to maintain a perfect confidence with his ministers, and particularly to conciliate the whigs, who were regarded as the champions of public liberty, and the supporters of the new settlement. Unfortunately, however, his impolitic aversion to the preponderance of either of the two great parties, and his personal dislike to some of the whigs, had created an alienation, which had been inflamed almost into open hostility, by the late contests for the secretaryship of state.

The arrangements arising from the conclusion of peace, had excited great interest in the public mind, and the fate of the army in particular had been warmly canvassed. A paper warfare had already commenced on this subject, and the question was agitated with extreme virulence; the adherents of the government labouring to prove the policy of maintaining a standing force, in the actual circumstances of the country, and of Europe, and their opponents dilating on every topic, calculated to inflame the public mind, and stigmatizing the troops with the names of Prætorian Guards, and Turkish Janissaries.

In such a state of general irritation, the king landed in England, and the parliament opened on the 3rd of December, 1697. The royal speech was unfortunately calculated to increase the ferment; for, after recommending the finances to the consideration of the legislature, the king adverted to the obnoxious topic, by declaring, that the country could not be safe, without the maintenance of a considerable force, as well *by land*, as by sea.

This expression was instantly made the theme of declamation and invective. It was bitterly censured, as an unconstitutional attempt to influence the votes of the House; the speech itself was invidiously compared with those of king James; and the clamours against a standing army, were renewed with increasing acrimony. The lords, indeed, voted a loyal answer; but the commons waited six days, and then replied in an address, replete with compliments and congratulations, yet cautiously abstaining from any reference to the express request of the king.

Instead of being prepared to meet the opposition, which was evidently meditated, the king maintained a sullen reserve towards

the whigs, and they, in return, not only evinced a reluctance to compromise their principles, and risk their popularity, but manifested a considerable degree of discontent, at the failure of their attempts to procure the promotion of lord Wharton. Indeed, that nobleman and his adherents, as well as many of the most ardent of their party, were more intent on procuring the dismission of Sunderland, than on devising means to support the interests, and further the views of the crown.

From such a beginning, the event may be readily anticipated. In a committee of the Commons, on the 19th of December, a proposal was made to disband all the troops, raised since 1680, or, in other words, to reduce the army to 8000 men. Though warmly opposed, it was carried without a division. The decision being reported to the House, the friends of government endeavoured to evade it, by moving for a recommittal, but lost the question, by a majority of 186 against 148. To obviate the danger, to which the country would be exposed, by such a diminution of the regular forces, a motion was carried by the opposition, for a bill to render the militia efficient. In the committee, however, the supporters of government again attempted to elude the execution of the former vote, by proposing the sum of 500,000*l.* for guards and garrisons, which would have sufficed for the maintenance of nearly 20,000 men ; but their adversaries were still too powerful, and too united, to be baffled, and the supply was reduced to the sum of 350,000*l.* The ministry had now no other resource, than to enter into a species of compromise, and, after much contention, the military establishment was fixed at 10,000 men, with 3,000 marines. Fortunately, however, for the country, the adverse party were unable to carry their design into immediate execution, by the previous necessity of raising funds for discharging the arrears due to the troops, and the expenses of disbanding them ; and thus, the accomplishment of the measure was deferred till the ensuing session.

To reconcile the king to this disappointment in his military views, the whigs so vehemently exerted themselves, that they obtained a grant of 700,000*l.* for the civil list, during his life, a

measure which he considered as requisite for his honour and independence, and which he had before repeatedly solicited in vain. But no concessions could soothe the mortification he felt at the intended reduction of the army; and the alienation between him and the whig chiefs was greatly aggravated, by their inability or unwillingness to afford him efficient support, for though some of them had made a manly stand against the designs of the opposition, they were faintly seconded by many of their own body.

Meanwhile, attempts had been made to restore cordiality, and to obtain the recall of Sunderland, either to his former post, or to some official situation. But, though the duke of Shrewsbury, the lord chancellor, the earl of Orford, and even Mr. Montague were sensible of the mischiefs which this division had created, and laboured to promote a reconciliation, the ardent whigs would not be satisfied, without the appointment of Wharton, as a test of Sunderland's sincerity. The feuds, at this time, were aggravated by personal pique and resentment. The adherents of Sunderland were suspected of instigating the attacks, which were made in the House of Commons, against Montague and others; and the victorious result of the struggle, rendered the whigs still more averse to an accommodation, from the presumption that they were sufficiently powerful, to dictate to the king, without the assistance of the excluded favourite. Every attempt, therefore, became more and more abortive, though Sunderland made repeated advances, though several of the whig chiefs professed a corresponding sentiment, and though the king himself condescended personally to interfere.

In fact, Sunderland was placed in a critical and embarrassing situation, in which he could not fail, either to incur the displeasure of the king, or to offend the whigs. His influence over the royal mind was certainly great, and he had, in many instances, exercised it with effect, in promoting their views. But he knew that the king's abhorrence of party bondage was insuperable, and that it was fruitless to combat his dislike of subjecting himself to the personal dictation of a nobleman, so overbearing as Wharton. He was fearful of risking his own favour, by urging proposals

which he was aware would be indignantly repelled; and, at the same time, unwilling to confess his want of influence. Hence, he was continually entangled in promises, which he had as little power as inclination to perform; and, consequently, his perpetual vacillations, and apparent inconsistencies, were daily urged, as new proofs of his insincerity.

From the moment that Sunderland had quitted his office, it was repeatedly and pressingly tendered to Shrewsbury, in the hope that he might be induced to accept a station of so little responsibility and attendance. This scheme was still kept in view, and, among the proposals which were subsequently canvassed, was the expedient, that he should be chamberlain, lord Wharton secretary, and lord Tankerville president of the council; while Sunderland declared his readiness to be satisfied with a place at the council board, without any official situation. But this overture, if sincere, was frustrated by the aversion of the king, on one hand, to acquiesce in the promotion of Wharton; and, on the other, by the opposition of Mr. Smith, sir Thomas Littleton, and other leaders, who possessed great influence in the House of Commons, to any reconciliation with Sunderland, whom they accused of inveterate hostility to their cause.

In this predicament, all parties appealed to the mediation of Shrewsbury. The king and Sunderland importuned him, through the agency of Mr. Vernon; and the whig chiefs made him the confidant of their hopes and designs, and expressed their reliance on his support, and their readiness to abide by his decision. With great reluctance, he was at length persuaded to take a share in a negotiation, from which he evidently augured little success. He was, therefore, privately invited to wait on the king; and, to obviate any suspicion of partiality, it was settled, that Sunderland should be absent from the capital at the time of his arrival. But, either from indisposition, or timidity, Shrewsbury repeatedly postponed the journey; and, at length, it was decided that he should meet the king at Newmarket, in the beginning of April, with Somers, Orford, and Wharton.

The greatest hopes were conceived, that his personal interposition would remove all difficulties, and pacify a feud, which pro-

duced such fatal effects. The event, however, justified his fears. Many conferences were held, but the refusal of the king to accept Wharton as secretary, and the determination of the whigs to submit to no other alternative, disappointed his endeavours, and he suddenly quitted Newmarket, still more hopeless of an accommodation than before. In fact, the pretensions of both sides were incompatible, and their mutual complaints and recriminations will shew the impracticability of any adjustment. The whig chiefs expatiated on the cold reserve of the king, and the ingratitude which he manifested for their services at the Revolution, and their subsequent support of his throne. They arraigned his pertinacity, in rejecting the only measure, which could strengthen their party, and give efficiency to his own government. On the other hand, the king condemned their domineering spirit, and their desire to monopolise all the offices of state. He declared, that if they had offered three candidates to his choice, he would have acceded to their request, but as they had dictatorily confined their recommendation to one nobleman, and represented all other expedients as inadmissible, he considered that his honour and dignity would have been equally compromised, by such a forced compliance. Hence, the attempt at accommodation served only to widen the breach, and to inflame the animosity of the ardent whigs against Sunderland, notwithstanding his humble professions of zeal for their cause, and the solemn asseveration of the king, that he had in no way influenced his decision.

An accommodation being thus hopeless, the whigs laboured to fortify their own interest; and, among other expedients for the purpose, Montague brought forward the plan of a new, and more extended East India company, which he had previously suggested; and the triumphant manner in which it was carried through parliament, inspired them with fresh confidence in their own strength. As a dissolution was also expected to follow the close of the session, they were still more averse to risk their popularity, on the eve of an election, by proclaiming an identity of interests with so obnoxious a favourite as Sunderland; and, therefore, all proceedings towards a reconciliation were suspended, as if by mutual consent, to the great dissatisfaction of the king.

As Shrewsbury decidedly repelled every proposal to accept the office of chamberlain, and, as no other alternative remained, to prevent a farther breach, he reluctantly consented to hold the seals, as a temporary deposit, but, at his own earnest request, his name was omitted in the commission of lords justices.

Soon after these fruitless attempts, William departed for the continent on the 20th of July, with renewed disgust towards the whigs, and with redoubled confidence in his excluded favourite, whom he considered as unjustly persecuted.*

LORD ORFORD TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Wishes him to accept the post of lord chamberlain.]

"*London, Dec.* 28-*Jan.* 7, 1697-8.—My lord; This letter comes to ask after your health, and to wish your grace a merry Christmas. I will not pretend to tell you the present news of the town, Mr. Secretary Vernon telling me, he had wrote you at large on that subject. I have been asked by two or three of your friends, particularly lord Montague, whether you would not like the place that is now vacant. I could make them no other answer, than that I wished you in any place you liked; that I knew nothing of your mind, but I feared you had taken a surfeit of a place at court. Give me leave only to say thus much, without your thinking me troublesome or impertinent. I wish you have not taken the resolution, and that you could bring yourself to bear being here; but you are the best judge what will suit with your inclinations, and, therefore, will only add, that wherever you are, or whatever you do, I shall be, my lord," &c.

This indirect solicitation was seconded by Mr. Vernon, at the command of the king, and at the instigation of the whig chiefs, in a letter, dated also Dec. 28-Jan. 7, 1697-8:—

"My lord Portland, returning this day from Windsor, gives me

* These remarks are principally taken from Vernon's correspondence with the duke of Shrewsbury, from January to June, compared with the parliamentary journals and debates.

the occasion for sending another messenger to your grace, that you may know how desirous the king is, that you should succeed my lord chamberlain. I can only acquaint you with it, at second hand, though I am directed likewise to write on this subject. I do not doubt but the king is entirely satisfied, that this disposal of the key, would be for his service. I wish it might be as easy to prevail with your grace to accept it. My lord Sunderland, I find, endeavours to remove one of your scruples, and would have it understood, that, if you have any consideration for him, it should rather be shewn in taking the staff, than in declining it. If the nation were to be polled, you would have a thousand to one voting for it; and, if you should withstand the joint wishes of all good men, in this particular, they must ever despond of seeing you give a helping hand to the public, which, I fear, stands in as great need of it now, as ever it did, when you ventured so much for the saving it. You will not only satisfy your friends, but preserve them; for, without such a cement and support, they must inevitably moulder away, and sink in their credit and usefulness, and I know not what catastrophe may ensue.

"I saw my lord chancellor to-day, before I knew I should have this occasion to write to you; and he saw nothing but ruin, if your grace could not be prevailed with to step in and prevent it. I am glad to hear that your grace's condescending in such an exigency, would not oblige you to come to town, sooner than your health would permit. The opinion only, and expectation, that your grace will once more appear, and act with your friends, will give a new life to affairs, and encourage men to carry on the common concern. We shall certainly be shipwrecked, though we have a peace, and the storm be over, if one of your grace's character do not help at the steerage. I would not be tedious, and it hardly becomes me to say so much, to one who judges better of all things, and that wishes equally well to the king and your country.

"I cannot but take notice, that those the world begins to talk of for this employment, are the duke of Newcastle and earl of Jersey.

"I hear nothing of the earl of Peterborough: I think his threats may be safely despised. I wish my lord Sunderland hath not too much humoured his vanity, and made him imagine how formidable he was, by the pains he took to manage him.

* * * * * *

"My lord Sunderland carried his lady to Windsor yesterday, and came back himself to-day with my lord Portland. I hear he thinks of going very soon to Althorp, but does not design any long stay there.

"I had an occasion to write last night to the king. I omitted nothing that might shew your grace's concern for my lord Sunderland. I should not, therefore, be sorry that he was then acquainted with it; and, lest he should not, I will make him a visit to-morrow for the same purpose."

* * * * * *

Shrewsbury had, however, still greater difficulty to withstand the importunities of the chancellor, who assailed him with every argument, which could be drawn from the motives of private friendship, or party interest.

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Dec.* 29-*Jan.* 8, 1697-8.—My lord; There have so many unexpected things happened, since your grace went out of town, as would make a wiser head than mine turn round. The last of all, which is that of my lord chamberlain's quitting, is, above all, surprising to me. Several things concurred to it, most of them unnecessarily brought about, by endeavouring to be over-sure in being supported, in case any attempt should be against him. It is too long to make a deduction of the whole in writing; but your grace would, perhaps, think the tale worthy hearing, if one could be so happy to wait upon you.

"I dare not say how far any body is innocent; but the greatest measure of guilt is laid at my lord Wharton's door, as I find, by my lord Sunderland; and he added, that, if your grace had been in town, this could never have come to pass. Having said this, I cannot but say, I think the king is left extremely destitute;

indeed, in such a circumstance, that it is utterly impossible for him to transact any longer with our party, unless you can have health enough to relieve us.

"The way is now entirely open, and I cannot but tell you, your country and friends call for you, in a manner which is not to be denied. The chamberlain's office is, above all others, consistent with your having allowances for the air, and for country sports; and yet does most naturally bring you near the king, when your health will admit. The king will hear of nobody else. My lord Sunderland owns, that it would be a most unreasonable niceness in you to decline it, unless you have taken a resolution never to meddle again with the king's business, which is contrary to what you have promised him. You are not under a necessity of entering upon it presently. Let the king but hope you will be brought to accept it: at least, do not refuse to deliberate upon the thing.

"I write to your grace in a more pressing manner than becomes me; but my excuse is, that I think you have a great opportunity of doing good to England, without the toil and danger of a secretary's place, and without the ruin of your health. Should your grace hearken to the king's desire, in taking this place, it would be the greatest turn of things, and the most notable disappointment of a scheme formed; and that without any act done, at least on our part, to contribute to it, that has happened in many years."

* * * * * *

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Presses him to accept, at a future period, the office of chamberlain, and considers his continuance in the administration, as the only means to prevent the ruin of the whig party—Suggests suspicions of lord Sunderland—Endeavours to tranquillize his fears of any farther charge in parliament.]

"*Jan.* 6-16, 1697-8.—My lord; I acknowledge the honour of your grace's letters of the 30th and 31st*, of the last month, and since you are pleased to require me, to tell you my thoughts plainly, as

* These letters are missing.

to your complying with the king's desire, in accepting the white staff, I thought myself obliged to consider of it, with all its circumstances, and to talk at large about it, with my lord Orford, that I might see how far we agreed in our sentiments. This is the reason I have deferred writing so long; and there is this, at least, of weight in what I now say, that it is entirely his opinion, as well as my own.

"Your grace's answer to the letters, was certainly right, and the scruple you made was formed upon proper grounds, so far as it respected the present acceptance of the office; but those difficulties are so very easily solved, that they cannot give so much as a pretence to decline it totally.

My lord chamberlain's quitting was so very sudden, that at first every body was at liberty to assign what causes he pleased for it. But now, all men agree he could no longer bear the coarse usage he was to expect every day, in speeches in the House of Commons, and was very doubtful it would come at last to votes. The turn he desires to give to this is, that the silence he observed in those of the party he had been serving, in the House of Commons, when he was *reflected upon*, and the coldness of those, who were not of that House, in undertaking to serve him, in case he should be attacked, shewed him that it was impossible for him to oblige the party, and to clear himself of their distrust, and that, therefore, it was time to give over struggling. But, as to all these things, he did most entirely acquit your grace, taking all occasions to let every body know, that there was a perfect good understanding between you, and that, if you had been in town, it had been impossible he should have been brought to this necessity of quitting, and that he will never meddle with business in England, unless in conjunction with your grace.

"I mention so much of this, because you may see it is become impossible for him, or any of his creatures, to give a turn to this affair, as if any thing had been underhand countenanced, and you cannot suspect, that any other body would be inclined to give it such an interpretation.

"But I must tell you, the expression in your letter to my lord Portland, which seemed to allow such a jealousy, in some sort reasonable, because of the occasion given by his correspondence with my lord Peterborough, put him to some uneasiness, and had not an ill effect on others.

"Since I have been so long on this subject, I will add this, that my lord Sp——,* Overt——,† and others, who are his confidents, all say, that Dunc——,‡ G——, and Tr——, did so perpetually alarm him, with stories of his being delivered up by the whigs, in order to engage him to change his side, and these stories were aggravated in such a fiery manner, by my lord P————§, that the physic was too strong, and operated quite contrary to their design; so that he durst not stay the time of turning out others, but shifted away himself.

"As to the other thing, which your letter mentioned, the report which had reached you, as if your name might probably be mentioned again in parliament; I am to tell you, that I have, with all the care, which the nature of such an inquiry would admit of, endeavoured to satisfy myself, if there was the least ground for such a report, and I assure you, I can find none. My lord Orford, my lord Wharton, and Mr. Montague, are all of the same opinion. We think there is nothing more likely to prevent such a design, if there ever had been any such, than my lord Sunderland's going off. If any thing of that kind was formed for this session, it was the aiming to blemish Mr. Montague, about the business of the exchequer bills, but that has been examined into, and they are utterly disappointed.

"It does not seem there is a disposition, in either House, to enter into any thing of that nature. However, you yourself cannot be more tender of any thing of this nature, than I would be, and therefore to remove this thought entirely, nothing is requisite but a little time. For my own part, I see nothing likely to arise, if the

---

* Probably lord Spencer.
† Overton.
‡ Duncombe, Guy, and Trevor.
§ Peterborough.

debate of the land forces were tolerably well over, which might occasion heats, or put men into a temper to bear such kind of things.

"Having thus declared my thoughts, as to the two points your grace did particularly take notice of, I will proceed in giving my poor opinion, that you should not decline this proposal of the king's, which he seems very much concerned you should not. As to what relates to yourself, not only those who are particularly your friends, do all allow of your desiring to leave so troublesome a place as secretary, because of your uncertain health; but, I do really apprehend, that if it were once publicly known, that you would no more meddle with any thing, I believe, not only the king but others, would be apt to put a very wrong construction upon it. And, I cannot but tell you, my lord S———* has endeavoured to form such a notion, both in the king and others, that he did apprehend your refusal, principally upon that ground, that you would have no more to do with things as they stood now. This is the state of the case, as to the place of chamberlain, which is laid down, to have so little objection to it, that it must be concluded, if not that, nothing can be accepted.

"As to the other part, that of the minister, it must not be dissembled, but that your friends hope you will take so much of it as your health will admit. You know so much of my thoughts, that, without your help, all the pretences of that party must be at an end, that I will not pretend to add to what I have said upon that subject, more than to say, that this is a very critical time, that unless you will be contented to bear so much of it, as your health will admit, all the pretences of the party, which seems now to have the possession, must be at an end. It is a very critical juncture. That which could not be effected by a dispute, is come to pass of itself, and some things have fallen out since, which make any return of his† more difficult, than, perhaps, he thought at first. I think you may make large allowances for your ill health, when you may be so certain, as I think you are, that you will have all

* Sunderland. † Lord Sunderland.

the help, and all the concurrence you can desire, from the friendship of those, with whom you act, without any underhand dealing.

"I will not enlarge upon this part: you see it in its whole extent. I think this to be a juncture, in which your grace may do great service to your country. If we are deceived, there will be no wonder, nor no ill consequence, if my lord ch————'s* ill health obliges him to go into the country, after he has endeavoured to serve in all the stations he could.

"I am quite ashamed of the tediousness of this, and will therefore say no more, but that I am, with all possible truth," &c.

"P. S. It was no little satisfaction to me, to learn, that all your papers were saved from the fire.† There are some stories my lord Orford and I have to tell you, that would entertain you; but, having told him, that I had made an end of a letter to you, which I was just sealing, he would oblige me, before I did it, to add that he hoped you would make all the haste to town which your health would admit."

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Vindicates himself from the accusation of influencing some of the members in the House of Commons.]

"*Windsor, Jan.* 15-25.—Sir; I will take the liberty to write freely to you, as to an old and a good friend, who will excuse me. I am informed that some in the House of Commons, who usually were thought to be influenced by me, have gone wrong of late, in particular sir William Trumbull, Mr. Duncombe, and Mr. Methuen. For the two first, I think people need only consider one moment, the difference between men in good places and good humour, and out of them, angry and unsatisfied. I believe nobody has seen or heard of any in those circumstances, that have not changed a good deal. I dare say there is no one example: I myself shall

* So in the original. He appears to speak of the duke of Shrewsbury, by anticipation, as lord chamberlain.

† At the office of the secretary of state.

make the first; for I will alter, neither as to persons nor things, wherever I am, which I hope my friends will believe, till they see the contrary. If I were among you, in the same condition I was two months ago, I could influence men, whose condition and dependence are quite changed; but as I am, I cannot influence any at all, nor am I such a fool as to think of it. As for Mr. Methuen, nobody was more amazed than I was, at what I heard, but I believe there is not a man alive that thinks I liked it. At Althorp and at Kensington, I shall always be of the same mind. I beg of you, that as it comes in your way, you will set such things as these right, with a little care, which will be a great obligation to," &c.

"P. S. I have set Thursday next for my journey to Althorp, and my wife is so mended, since a few days, that she hopes to go with me."

We cannot introduce the letters of Mr. Montague, who at this period was first lord of the Treasury and chancellor of the Exchequer, without expressing our regret, that his interesting correspondence with the duke of Shrewsbury, should have been so limited. The two following letters were written at a period of peculiar interest, no less with regard to himself, than to the public, for they shew the progress of those jealousies, which led to the dissolution of the whig ministry. The hostility, which Montague had manifested against Sunderland, was resented by some of his adherents, who, in conjunction with the tories, attacked the conduct of Montague, in parliament. He, however, not only defended himself with spirit and ability, but retaliated by a counter attack on the partisans of Sunderland. Among these was Mr. Duncombe, Receiver-General of the Customs, who, with others, was accused of having defrauded the government of considerable sums of money, by forging indorsements on exchequer bills, to obtain the interest, which such securities were entitled to bear, after being received in payment of the revenue. The charge was successful in the House of Commons, where bills of pains and

penalties were passed against the delinquents, but thrown out in the Lords, by the interest of the king's friends.

In retaliation, a counter-attack was soon afterwards directed against Mr. Montague, by an attempt to revoke a grant of fines and forfeitures, amounting to above 22,000*l.*, in Ireland, to a person of the name of Railton, in which he avowed himself to be interested. But this attempt, though made unexpectedly, was baffled by his own eloquence, and the influence of the whigs in the House of Commons, and he had the address even to obtain a vote, declaring him entitled to the royal favour.

Collaterally with those topics, the letters advert to the cabals of parties in the cabinet, and particularly shew the resentment fostered by the zealous whigs against lord Sunderland, though his son, lord Spencer, as well as his friend, Mr. Methuen, and several of his adherents, had supported Mr. Montague, in the debate on the Irish grant. They at the same time prove the anxiety of the party to gain the confidence, and employ the interest, of the duke of Shrewsbury.

MR. MONTAGUE TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Thanks the duke for his confidence and support—Will retaliate on his enemies.]

"*Jan.* 18-28, 1697-8.—My lord; I had the honour of your grace's letter of the 6th of December, in behalf of Mr. Walsh,* and being, by my own inclinations, before I received your commands, to serve him, I thought the best answer I could make, in the hurry of business I am in, was, to do what you desired, without telling you so in writing. But, finding, by your letters to Mr. Vernon and Mr. Bridges, that you are pleased to shew a particular concern for me, I could not omit returning my thanks, in the most grateful manner I can express. The malice of my enemies has been very remarkable, but I can assure you, it has not given me one unquiet hour; and, before many days are past, you will hear

* Author of several whig political poems, particularly "The Golden Age Restored."

I have carried the war into their own country. I wish any use could be made of these malicious attacks; for, when rage proves impotent, advantages are easily taken. I am sure I should have had no quarter, and I will give none, unless you command me. You will wonder, perhaps, to hear a man under prosecution talk at this rate; but I have all along had the utmost contempt for their endeavours, and I have more reason, since yesterday, than ever; for I think we are again united to all the mistaken friends that left us. Great overtures of reconciliation are now making, if it were possible to know whether peace or war would make the white staff* most acceptable to you, that should be my choice; but, since I despair of knowing that, I wish all health and happiness may attend you, wherever you are, and beg you would believe I would do any thing to serve, if you would let me know what would most please you."

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO MR. MONTAGUE.

[Has supported Mr. Montague in parliament—Dissuades him from resenting the attacks of his enemies, and from opposing the reconciliation with Sunderland—Wishes lord Wharton to have the seals—Is doubtful whether he shall continue in a public employment.]

"*Eyford, Jan. 22-Feb.* 1, 1697-8.—Sir; I never designed that Mr. Secretary, or Mr. Brydges, should give you the trouble of seeing my sense of the unjust methods by which a reflection was intended against you, nor did I ever imagine your enemies could hurt or affect you, upon so unreasonable a pretence; but I was not willing that any friend of mine should forget how really I have, and ever shall profess myself to be your's, which made me write to them, and to some others, in the manner I did; and I had sent to more, but that I feared so clear and maintainable a cause might be prejudiced by appearing too much concerned.

"I doubt not but your success has, by this time, answered my expectation; and, as for carrying the war into the enemy's country, I can give no opinion how fit it may be, not being ac-

* Of lord chamberlain.

quainted with the particular circumstances. But I make no question but you will judge calmly of the matter, and consider the public and your own interest, before any private resentment; and, especially, be cautious not to alienate the king's mind from yourself, or your friends, by doing any thing to confirm the opinion some have laboured to give him, that the whigs have a natural sourness, that makes them not to be lived with.

"Upon this occasion, I cannot forbear mentioning the overtures of reconcilement, which I understand have lately been made by a great man* now in the country, some of which seem to me, at this distance, and in the ignorance I am of particular circumstances, to be reasonable, provided there be not such a prejudice in many of our friends, that one cannot live fairly with him without losing them. I conceive such terms might now be made, as, if it were in his will, would not, for some time, leave it in his power to do much mischief; and, I think he will ever be so ill-esteemed by the country gentlemen, that, when he begins to play tricks, you have it always in your hands to be rid of him; and, if he be wise, he will see his own footing, and be cautious. And, perhaps, it is no unlucky circumstance, for those who are to be at the head of a king's council, to have one joined with them, of whom the nation has so ill an opinion, that, whatever may be advised, contrary to their liking, they are most inclined to lay the blame on him.

"But what I chiefly apprehend, if the treaty should break off, on your parts, is, that the king will attribute to you his being forced from him, which is a loss he will esteem irreparable; but I am sensible how unfit a man at this distance is to judge, and, therefore, all I say on this occasion, is entirely submitted to you, and to the opinion of the rest of our friends, who have formerly discoursed on this subject, to whom I am willing my thoughts should be communicated, if you think it proper. Only, if any treaty be concluded, I should hold it necessary to insist that my lord W——† have the seals, if he consent to be troubled with

* Lord Sunderland. † Lord Wharton.

them; for I doubt you would not find your account in the other person proposed.

"You see I speak to you of others with freedom and confidence, and shall tell you my thoughts relating to myself, with as little reserve, as to any man living. My lord S.'s returning to court, or not, will have no manner of effect, one way or other, upon me, who, if I come there, can either live well with him, or without him, as shall be thought most advisable. But what keeps me at present undetermined, as to myself, is a doubt whether the circumstances of my own humour, and health, will ever permit me to appear in a public employment. A constitution that will endure neither business nor pleasure, can have recourse to nothing but that *otium*, which I know not how to express well in english; and I should not struggle one moment against my own inclination to retirement, had I not a sensible regret to leave some friends, who have behaved themselves to me with a sincerity not common in a court. If you believe my sense of their kindness, you will not doubt my being, Mr. Montague's," &c.

MR. MONTAGUE TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Endeavours to inspire him with a jealousy of Sunderland—Thinks a cordial union between his grace and the whigs would enable them to form a new and permanent administration—Exults in the disgrace of Duncombe—Presses his grace to accept the post of lord chamberlain; and add his weight against Sunderland—Plan of Wharton to make the new favourite, lord Albemarle, minister—Anxious for the duke's return to town.]

"*Feb.* 1-11, 1697-8.—My lord; I have the honour of your's of the 22nd January, and am very much obliged to you for the confidence you express towards me, and do assure you, it could no where be more safely placed. Our circumstances are such, that I think the nation had been long ago ruined, but for the unalterable friendship and union that has been maintained between some of us; and I think at this juncture, if we can perfectly know one another's mind, without any reserve, sound measures may be taken. I must own myself to be one of those, that all along thought the duke of Shrewsbury had some uneasi-

ness in business, from several circumstances that attend my lord Sunderland's power and conduct, which would be removed with him; and this had more weight with me, to wish it so, than any other consideration; for I thought, with you, we could always make a stand, and, without you, we should be lost by piece-meal. The old scheme, whatever it was, is confounded, and he is to begin the world again; and, if you will allow yourself to be made the corner stone, we will raise such a structure, as shall not easily be destroyed, especially when we have taken away his tools and engines. Duncombe's fall will more disable him, and cut off his power to play tricks, than any thing else could have done. He was the cement that kept Peterborough, Bolton, Seymour, and the rest united. He was the Iago of the whole villany, and nothing can keep them together, but such a busy temper, joined with a faculty of helping those that have money, to dispose of it, and those that have none, to borrow.

"Trevor has been for some time laid aside, and Guy may be made, either to be subservient, and break off his underpart, or, if he cannot be trusted, I think he may be still blasted, and sent after Duncombe. So that, if you would declare, and accept the staff, it would not be easy for him to break the terms that shall be agreed upon in the new treaty; but I would have that concession from you a preliminary. Were this settled, the agreement should be, that we would have but one common interest, the same friends, and the same enemies. No measures to be kept, no friendship maintained, with those that are at defiance with the rest; and for proof of their sincerity in this point, the king's displeasure should be immediately shewn, on those that have been, underhand, fostered and nursed up to supplant us. Let this blow be given by the hand which has skreened, and afterwards let them patch up as they can.

"I enter into no particulars, because I think this allowed, in general, would remove all obstacles in men, though I believe some are great; for, if the king has his coldness, our friends have their aversion, and pains must be taken on both sides. For my part, I will take my share, when I hear from you, and, till then, I will

not meddle. Lord C———* and lord O——† seem to like such an accommodation. Lord W———‡ wishes it otherwise, but I am sure he will hear reason. Mr. Smith, sir R. Rich, and most of the House of Commons, are determined against having any thing to do with him. Whether they can be mollified is uncertain, for I do not know that any endeavours have been used to persuade them; for men must first be resolved before they convert others.

"My lord W——— has been framing a new scheme, in concert with a fair lady,§ to make my lord Albemarle‖ the minister. On Sunday my lord C———, lord O——, and I, met him at dinner with that lord. It was designed they should have entered upon business, and taken measures immediately, but my lord C——— had no disposition, either to the thing, or to come to it, at the first interview. It is difficult to make a right judgment of this affair. The young man, either by his own inclination, or her persuasion, does affect it, and thinks this is the juncture to press it. He renounces the absent, and pretends the king approves of the steps he makes. On the other hand, to think his youth can attend, or his experience convince, and enforce business, or his favour allow him to contradict and oppose, is hard to conceive. However, the meeting went off very easy: there was something of a mixture of gaiety and business, that suited with the humour and the present design of the lord. He liked those two, he did not know before, extremely. My lord O—— was very well pleased, but the other seems to think this too light for the great seal.

"On Thursday we dine with my lord Orford, and I think it will do some good to make them acquainted. If the king desires it should go farther, he may easily have it.

"My lord, by what I have writ, you may see how desirous I am to have you again amongst us, that the hopes of that make me think there may be safety in my lord Sunderland's return; and, if there be, I value not what risk I run. But, if my lord

* Chancellor. † Orford. ‡ Wharton. § Probably Mrs. Villiers.

‖ A young dutch nobleman, who had recently supplanted lord Portland in the king's favour. For an account of him, see the latter end of the following chapter 8.

Shrewsbury would embark without him, I am confident it were better for the public. Empower your friends to let the king know what you would have, and I do not despair of obtaining it; but, if it be possible, let us either see you here, or come within distance of being spoke to, and all will go well. If I would be responsible for any thing in parliament, I could assure you, all the ill humour of the session will be spent in the matter of exchequer bills; and I do wish to see you before the end of the parliament, and the country shall see the face of business mend upon your return. Let me know your thoughts, upon what condition we may have you, either to be kept private, or made known, and your opinion shall be mine. I will have the same sentiments, and I will enter upon any measures, whatever consequence they may have to me, in the end, if they can restore me to the duke of Shrewsbury, in the beginning," &c.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Thanks him for his friendship.]

"*Althorp, Feb.* 5-15, 1697-8.—My lord; I know so well, that you do not care for any thing, that looks like compliment, that if I could forbear, I would not now trouble you; but I have heard of late so much of your favour to me, that, without being quite brutal, it is impossible not to tell you, at least, that I am as sensible of *it*, as I can be of any thing in the world, and that, as long as I *live*, I will be, most truly and cordially, my lord, your's," &c.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Is willing to return to the administration,* with no other post than the place of privy counsellor—Would be greatly mortified if his grace should retire—Asseverations of his zeal and sincerity towards the whigs.]

"*Althorp, Feb. 24-March 6,* 1697-8.—My lord; I have received your letter of the 16th,* with very great satisfaction, being so particular a mark of your favour and kindness, which I always

* Not extant.

have, and ever shall, value as I ought. In answer to it, I must own, that when I laid down the place of chamberlain, I did it with a desire never to have any thing to do again in public business, for sure it was the wrongest step that could be made, if I had not been very positively of that mind. My judgment and my inclination are still the same; but I submit both to the king, who was more displeased and angry at what I did, than I imagined, and took it with less indifferency, in relation to his affairs, than I could have thought, without presumption, which obliges me, who owe him so much, to be disposed of as he pleases, provided that he gives me leave to serve him as a privy counsellor only, without a place, which would now be insupportably ridiculous, after having quitted one so lately. I must add to this, that I do not know what the king's mind is, but I do know, that if it be to make use of me in business, and that you retire from it, I shall think myself the most unhappy man alive; for there will be nothing but disorder, confusion, and groundless fears, and jealousies.

"I can say, with exact truth, that for five or six years, that I have had the honour to be near the king, I have assisted the party I joined with, and every individual man of the party, according to my dealing with them, to the best of my understanding; but if nineteen things are done, and the twentieth remains undone, though it is impossible, you know how it is; and yet my politics are not changed, nor shall they, no more than the sincerity with which I am, and will for ever be," &c.

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Solicits his support for Mr. Walsh—Conversation with the king on the necessity of some ministerial arrangement, and the impolicy of rejecting lord Wharton—Hints of the adherents of Sunderland, that the king would not accept the services of the whigs, without his agency.]

"*May* 3-13, 1698.—My lord; I was much out of countenance for having made my visit at Woburn so long, when I came to know your grace intended to set forward for Eyforth, the same day. The evening was extremely cold, but I hope it had no ill effect upon you.

"I have seen Mr. Walsh, since I waited upon your grace, and find he is very desirous to serve for the county*, if he thought he might succeed. He intends to sound the gentlemen, who are in town, severally, and then he will let your grace know their inclinations. The papers inclosed, were delivered me by my lord Coningsby, with a desire I would transmit them to your grace. The writing is Mr. Norbury's, of Wych.

"On Sunday was s'ennight, I had some discourse with the king on the jealousy and dissatisfaction which was amongst our friends, of my lord Wharton, and the unhappiness it would be to his majesty, if he should look upon himself as refused, upon the account of particular and personal objections; of the necessity of taking men of business into his service, which could not be carried on, as things now stood, with much other discourse of this nature. I know not what effect it will have, but the present answer was much to the effect of what I had heard from your grace.

"Since that, he appointed my lord Orford to attend him, on Tuesday last, and Mr. Montague, on Thursday, and spoke to them both, upon the same subject, I had talked to him of before. But yesterday, I was strangely surprised with a very frank discourse from Mr. Overton, that my lord S————† was indeed in the wrong, in quitting in the manner he did, but that he could not imagine, that the whigs could have been so overseen, as not to have sent for him again, in a fortnight. But now they must see their error, though it was late, for the king had shewed plainly, he would not transact with them, unless by the means of my lord Sunderland, and that the meaning of his conduct, in the manner it has been, is to let the whigs understand, they must solicit him to bring that lord back, if they hope he should go on with them. This was all said to be his own judgment, without any authority to say it, and that is not impossible, by the indiscretion of it; but yet I could not but think it extraordinary enough, to trouble you with the relation of it.

"There are discourses of other intrigues carrying on, but if I

*, Worcestershire. † Sunderland.

should mention them, it were to seem to put more value upon them, than I do.

"If your grace would resolve to give yourself up to the re-establishment of your health, it would be of more consequence to your country, and of more advantage to your friends, than can ever be hoped for, from your being perpetually importuned with business, in such a state of health as your's at present is, unless things proceeded more smoothly, and reasonably, than I expect to see in any short time."

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On election arrangements—Promises to support the duke's friends—Offers his interest to obtain for his grace a grant of the territory of New York—The king confines his confidence to lord Sunderland.]

"*May* 26-*June* 5, 1698.—My lord; I give your grace very particular thanks, for your favourable intentions to my brother Cocks.* Mr. Bromley says, the persons, who are named to depend upon him, by Mr. Norbury, are all disposed already, as as can be desired.

"I have mentioned Barrett to my lord Orford, who says, he will take care he shall do as your grace directs. I think nobody can vote, who has not taken the oaths.

"I have a promise from the Treasury, that is, from a majority, that there shall be no retrospect, so that your grace may make what use you please of that matter. As to the county,† all I can acquaint you with, is, that the gentlemen here, have met often; but the difficulty of proposing first, makes their meetings come to nothing. They are universally agreed to go along with your grace; and if, upon discoursing with persons in the country, you would determine who were preferable, I dare say they would very zealously enter into your thoughts, and unite in promoting their

* Charles Cocks, of an antient family in Herefordshire, who had represented Worcester and Droitwich in several parliaments, married Mary, the sister, and afterwards co-heiress of lord Somers: he is the ancestor of sir Charles Cocks, who was raised to the title of lord Somers, of Evesham, in 1784.

† Worcestershire, for which county sir John Packington and Mr. Walsh were returned.

election. Mr. Lygon and sir James Rushout have been named to me, by most of those who have spoken on this subject; but I am utterly a stranger to the latter, having never once seen him.

"Having entertained you so much with elections, I must ask your leave to tell your grace of a thing, which sir John Talbot mentioned to me. It was in relation to New York, which was granted by king Charles to the duke of York, and which he thought might be a proper thing to be given to your grace. I should think myself the happiest man in the world, to be instrumental in any degree to serve your grace, in any thing of this nature. About two hours since, he sent me the grant to the duke of York, which, I find, contains a grant of the whole country, and of royal powers there. How far (since the late complaints against the proprietors of other plantations) it may be proper to desire a grant of the government, or whether the grant of any thing in the plantations, be what is desirable to you, I should be very glad to know, that, if it were so, I might set myself to know, what difficulties we might be likely to meet with, to the end to lay the whole before you, and as soon as I had your licence, to use all the best means I could think of, in promoting this, or any other thing, which might be acceptable to your grace.

"I am more than ever confirmed in my opinion, that my lord Sunderland is to return; and, if one may believe Mr. Methuen, he is now the only person to whom the king talks of business, or trusts in his affairs, till the return of that other lord.* I had almost forgot to acquaint you, that Rudge is not to be depended upon, if he be not mistaken by our friends."

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Electioneering arrangements—Offers his own and his friends' cordial support.]

"*June* 9-19, 1698.—My lord; I shall not pretend to stir in the matter, which sir John Talbot mentioned, without leave from you; but, whenever you will allow me to do it, in that or any other thing, I hope you will not only believe, that I shall enter upon it with

* Lord Portland, who was then about to return from his embassy at Paris.

the utmost satisfaction, but, as far as I am capable, will manage it, so as may be most easy to your grace, and without your appearing.

"It will, I doubt, be hard to find two such men, as were to be wished for, to serve for the county; but your grace will have the gentlemen with you, and it will not be very difficult to find out who are most likely to succeed.

"Mr. Bromley went for the country last week; sir John Rushout, as I am told, goes this week; and Mr. Walsh will be there shortly.

"My lord Herbert says, he will act wholly by your direction, and Mr. Lechmere left the town on Monday, and intends to wait upon your grace, as soon as he can, after he has got home. My brother Cocks is gone, very ill, to the Bath. Mr. Dowdeswell is entirely at your disposal, and so, I am told, is sir Thomas Rouse, whom I have not seen of late.

"It were to be wished, that somewhat were agreed upon, as soon as possible, not only for the reason your grace mentions, that while the deliberation continues, the others get ground; but because the parliament may be called perhaps sooner than was expected. The king seems enough disposed that way; and, therefore I should be very glad of your grace's thoughts, whether it be not desirable to have the writs go out quickly, rather than to have the nation in a ferment all the summer, and, that during the king's absence, and the elections to be made, at a time when the taxes are levying, and, perhaps, when there may be a want of money to pay quarters.

"The two million project is likely to succeed, and, I am apt to think, that may interrupt some things, which were resolved upon. However it be, it will make this session less burdensome to the body of the people, than could have been hoped for, by any other method, and, consequently, our friends may be more bold in venturing the sooner on the new choice," &c.

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Election business—On the proposed dissolution of parliament—Return of lord Portland from his embassy—Doubts the sincerity of the french king.]

"*June* 23-*July* 3, 1698.—My lord; since you are pleased to have it so, I have told sir John Talbot, you have judged the thing improper, and have delivered back to him the letters patent* and instructions.

"I cannot but think it requisite, Mr. Walsh should be in the country, if your grace has any intentions of recommending him, especially if the elections be immediately after the conclusion of this session, which our friends here (who are fit to be trusted with such a question) seem universally to wish. Your grace's opinion has absolutely determined me in the point, and upon my using to the king those arguments, which it was most likely he would taste best, he seemed to give into it so far, as to say, if our friends thought it best, he would be persuaded.

"If the project for the East India trade succeeds, I believe it will be thought necessary to keep some measures with old friends; but, there is a wonderful agitation in behalf of the old Company, so that, though this day the bill is ordered to be engrossed, I think it is not to be depended upon that it will pass.

"My lord Portland is come back, oppressed with civilities, but I do not find that, beyond outward respects, he has brought any proofs of the sincerity of the french king's good meaning to our's. This is remarkable, that Madam Maintenon, who governs all absolutely, declined to see him.

"I have been much indisposed for some days, and this day confined to my chamber, so that I cannot give your grace so good an account of things, as I desire."

---

* Alluding to the proposed grant of New York.

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Prorogation of the parliament preparatory to a dissolution—Election arrangements—Has recommended Mr. Walsh to the king—Considerations on the object of lord Sunderland's proposed return to town—The whigs not inclined to unite with him.]

"*July* 5-15, 1698.—My lord; This day the parliament was prorogued to the second of August, but with a purpose, as we are told, of dissolving it by proclamation, the next council day, and in the same proclamation, to give notice of issuing out writs for a new choice.

"It is possible your grace may see proper to take resolutions, as to the Worcestershire elections, according to this information, unless it may be supposed my lord S———'s* coming to town, on Thursday next, may produce something new. I do not find our friends disposed to enter into any measures with him, though I hear your grace is extremely of opinion, it is necessary to be united, and that my lord Orford and I are for it, though against our inclinations, to serve our interests.

"Mr. Foley told me the whigs were setting up against him in Worcestershire, and that your grace would propose two new knights at the meeting at the sessions. I said, I knew not of any such resolution, nor did pretend to meddle in that country; but, if your grace interposed, and thought my concurrence of use, I should certainly be of your mind. He said, he hoped your grace would give his character at that meeting, and that I would acquaint you with his request, which I promised him. When this was said, he told me, that he was likely to be disturbed in the country, and his son at Stafford; and, therefore, I ought to consider that they must come in at Wych,† which would turn the difficulty upon my brother Cocks, and so we parted.

"I have taken an occasion of speaking of Mr. Walsh to the king, in the most advantageous manner I could express myself; and have told him your good thoughts of him, and think there is such an impression made, that, upon the first good occasion, one

* Sunderland. † Droitwich.

may expect success; and I am of opinion Mr. Walsh cannot do more for his advantage, than to aim at some employment abroad.

"I should wonder at my lord S—— coming to town so immediately after the rising of parliament, if I did not think there was a good deal of impatience on both sides; one having as much mind to be sent for, as the other has to send.

"This tendency of things does not seem to be very suitable to the advancing subscriptions upon the East India bill, nor to be calculated for one sort of elections for the next parliament. But, as far as I can observe, your grace's old servants are determined to do all they can, to have a good parliament, whatever else is like to ensue.

"I am so exceedingly worn out with the parliament, the Term, and a great degree of indisposition, that I must ask leave to conclude abruptly, as being scarce able to write what I am, with the most sincere respect," &c.

The subsequent letter from Mr. Montague relates to his scheme for superseding the old East India company, which had long been exposed to the hostilities of the whigs. Proposals being made to the governors for advancing a loan to government, on the condition of receiving a parliamentary sanction of their charter; they offered 700,000*l*. But, before they came to a decision, a body of moneyed men in London, at the instigation of Mr. Montague, tendered an advance of two millions, on the condition of an exclusive trade to the East Indies. The respective proposals were submitted to parliament, and the offer of the merchants was warmly supported by Mr. Montague. The East India company in vain represented their sacrifices and services, and in vain made a tardy offer of the same sum as their opponents. The scheme espoused by the first lord of the Treasury was afterwards carried through the Commons, notwithstanding the most powerful opposition; and it experienced the same success in the House of Peers.

MR. MONTAGUE TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the views of lord Albemarle—Success of the new scheme for the East India company—The opposition beyond his expectations—Exults in the persuasion that the views of lord Sunderland are baffled.]

"*July* 16-26, 1698.—My lord; I was very glad, on many accounts, to receive the honour of your letter of the 4th July, for I had omitted answering your former so long, that I was ashamed to acknowledge them; but the session is now at an end, and I would gladly atone for my faults. I never could hear there was any intention of the king to buy Combury, and I suppose you hear my lord Albemarle has agreed for Twittenham Park, and then there can be no farther danger; for, if there was any thing in the report, it was designed for him. I believe he will affect the contrary party to his rival,* and seem to make a fine seat and settlement in England.

"I gave your letter, recommending an Oxfordshire gentleman, to Mr. Clark, to have him employed. I have not heard what they have done, but I pressed it as much as I could. I am sorry to hear you have not been of late so well as formerly. I was in hopes great quiet, and the country air, would have perfected your cure, and made you able, though you continued unwilling, to serve the public; but, for that matter, I have promised, and I will keep my word, of not speaking to you any more about it; and, indeed, the toil and vexation we have, that are engaged, will not tempt those that know it, and are lookers on, to enter the lists again.

"For my part, since I saw you, I have been in such a storm of business, as never blew out of any quarter before. I was not ignorant of what I undertook, nor insensible of the opposition I should meet with, from such a set of men, as the East India company; but, really, the dispute was more obstinate than I did expect. I saw no other way, but something of that kind, to make any tolerable end of the session, and fix the civil list; and, there-

* Lord Portland.

fore, I thought it ought to be risked; but, in the progress, the contest ran so high, I repented, heartily, it was ever attempted. But, notwithstanding all the opposition, that the wit or malice of the party could give in the House, we kept our scheme entire; and though, since the act passed, there has been more industry used to run it down, as a chimera and an idle notion, the subscriptions began on Thursday, at one, and were completed to-night, at seven.

"I must confess I always thought it could not fail, if the act passed, but the success is beyond all expectation; and it is certain there might have been another million taken on the same terms. This contest, and some other accidents, have freed us from a companion* that was intended us, who would have been worse than all this; but I think we are got clear of that fire-ship for ever. If he annoys us now, it must be hoisting the enemy's colours; and, under that declaration, I do not fear him.

"As the winter has been very bad, the nature of our supplies are such as will make the summer more easy; therefore, I hope you will suggest how we may spend a few days together, and I will contrive how to comply with it. I am sorry you are out of business, for my own and country's interest; but the pleasure of your conversation is no small reason of my desiring to have you with us, and, if you will allow me some share of that, I will more willingly part with the other," &c.

THE EARL OF ORFORD TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Lord Sunderland's visit to London—Thinks he is dissatisfied, and disappointed in the king's decision not to engage him in public business—Condoles with him on some uneasiness—Blames the king for wishing him to retain the seals, and, at the same time, omitting his name in the commission of lords justices.]

"*July* 16-26, 1698.—My lord; I am unresolved whether I shall rejoice or condole with your grace, at the news Mr. Secretary tells me, of your having the gout. I have heard that long life attends that distemper, though with the uneasiness of some pain. I

* Lord Sunderland.

heartily wish you the first, but no servant you have will be more truly afflicted, should you have the latter.

"I know you receive from better hands the news of the town, as also of the court: I cannot say either has afforded much. Lord Sunderland's coming to town made a great deal of discourse for four days; that is, till it was known he was not to come into business, then the application, which was before in abundance, fell, and, like good courtiers, he is dropt, and his lordship has his quiet hours, like those that it is known can do neither good or harm; though I do not know whether that be perfectly his case as yet. He was with me after he had seen the king the last time, and told me, he had a joy, greater than it was possible for him to express, that the king had been pleased to shew so much goodness to him, to suffer him to retire to Althorp, and never to think of business, which he was so unfit for. But it is very discernible in his face, but much more in my lady's, that this resolution and favour of the king's was not expected, and not at all liked of. You will make your own reflections of this matter. He has said a great deal to me of you, but that will be too tedious in a letter: I will endeavour to remember it, when I have the honour to see you, which I am told I may hope for in August, either at * * *,* or Winchendon.† I shall like either, so I may have the good fortune to see you, and to assure you, how much I am your servant.

"Thus far I had wrote, when I was honoured with your letter. I am heartily sorry to hear the gout is in so many places, and so painful; and I find, by the style of your letter, you are not without a good deal of the spleen, but I am far from blaming you to lie under it. Most men in health, that can distinguish, have too often occasion given them, to fall under the like distemper of spleen, but, I must confess, what you complain of would make any body uneasy; and, in my poor opinion, it is the most ridiculous thing I ever heard of, after resolving you should keep the seals, for a few weeks longer, to expect you should continue with them after he had left England. This I think is a very ridiculous thought;

* Illegible.

† The seat of lord Wharton,

but what he* has done to-day makes it much more, or, rather, impossible for you to keep them, or he to expect it, which is, naming the justices, and seeing your name out; so that, I think, when this is represented to him, he must yield to what you desire. I will not fail, to-morrow, to speak to him about it, as from myself, in the best manner I can. You know so well my interest, that I need not tell you, that I cannot promise my reasoning will prevail; but, I can assure you, my representation shall be with all imaginable intentions for your pleasure and service, which I hope you believe, in this or any commands you have for me, I will execute it with a zeal that becomes the professions I have so often made of being," &c.

* The king. Lord Orford was not, at this time, informed that the duke of Shrewsbury was omitted in the commission of lords justices, at his own particular request.

CHAPTER 7.

1698.

Offer of the embassy to Spain rejected by lord Wharton—Contest for the new elections—Declining influence of the whigs—Scheme of Mr. Montague to secure the auditorship of the exchequer, in reversion—Protracted stay of the king abroad—The whigs jealous of his majesty's returning partiality to the tories—Shrewsbury perseveres in his resolution to resign, in opposition to the joint efforts of the king and the whigs—Embarrassed situation of affairs in Ireland—Correspondence from July to October, 1698.

ALL hope of effecting a reconciliation between Sunderland and the whigs being frustrated, by the failure of the conference at Newmarket, no farther attempt was made, except an offer of the spanish embassy to lord Wharton, which he peremptorily declined.

On the dissolution of the parliament, the attention of the two parties was deeply engrossed by the contests of a new election. The whigs, however, to their mortification, found their credit considerably diminished, and lost much of the interest which had hitherto given them preponderance. Censured as the advocates of a standing army, accused of partiality and oppression, in the support of their darling project of a new East India company; maligned as the imposers of the burthens, which the war had rendered necessary, and unsustained by the confidence of the sovereign, they were disappointed in their appeal to public opinion; and Wharton, in particular, was unsuccessful in most of the elections, where he had hitherto exercised uncontrolled influence.

The king, in the mean time, protracted his stay abroad, notwithstanding the national clamour at his absence; and, after the elections were terminated, deferred the meeting of parliament, under various pretences, with the evident purpose of observing the struggle for pre-eminence, and waiting the event. At length

he returned to England, on the 3rd of December, apparently uncertain which party to favour; and it was even suspected by the whigs, that he would countenance the choice of a tory speaker, against sir Thomas Lyttleton, the whig candidate, who had distinguished himself by his enmity to Sunderland. Indignant at this supposed opposition to their wishes, they cast their suspicions on Mr. Vernon, who had maintained some intercourse with Harley and Foley, the leaders of the tories, and was considered as subject to the control of Sunderland, to whom he owed his appointment. The marked attention which Vernon experienced from the king, on his arrival at Kensington, gave colour to their jealousy, and we trace hints, that they did not spare even Shrewsbury himself, with whom Vernon was more closely connected than with Sunderland.

Disappointed in his various efforts to mediate a reconciliation, and conscious that the assistance of Sunderland was absolutely necessary, to form an efficient system of administration, Shrewsbury had cautiously abstained from any direct interference, either with the king or the whigs. Holding the seals with reluctance, and considering himself a mere cypher in the ministry, he had anxiously sought for an opportunity to withdraw, that he might avoid any entanglement in the midst of the factious struggles which were likely to occur. He persevered in his importunities for leave to retire, till he silenced the objections of his friends, and, at length, nothing remained but to determine the particular mode and time of his resignation. With unfeigned reluctance he consented to wait the return of the king from abroad, and when that period approached, he repaired to London, for the purpose of delivering the seals in person. But a nearer view of the political theatre increased the alarm which already agitated his timid mind; and, from the dread that he should again be overcome, by the solicitations of the sovereign, he hurried back to Eyford, without fulfilling his purpose; though with an increased determination to obtain a speedy deliverance from the cares and responsibility of office.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Has obtained the king's consent to decline all share in public business.]

"*London, July* 21-31, 1698.—My lord; when you were so kind as to write to me, before you met the king, at Windsor, I then let you know what my thoughts were, in relation to business.

"They have continued to be the same, and since I have seen the king, he does not think me much in the wrong, so that, upon the whole, I intend to go to Althorp, next week, and design to be there, all winter, and never more to trouble myself, or any body else, with public business. The king is very kind, my friends seem to be so too, and I hope you will believe, that I am, and shall ever be, to the public, to my friends, and, in my opinion, as I have often professed to you, and to yourself most sincerely, and most constantly, a most faithful, obedient, and humble servant," &c.

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Has again mentioned to the king the duke's wish to retire—Advises his grace not to decline the embassy to Spain, which had been offered him by his majesty—On election business.]

"*July* 26-*Aug.* 5, 1698.—My lord; I have so very just excuses for not acknowledging sooner, the favour of your grace's, of the 11th, that I am sure you would be so good as to allow of them, and yet I think I must want a greater excuse, if I should go about to set them down.

"Immediately after I knew your mind, I spoke to the king for Mr. Yard,* and took the liberty to use your grace's name. The king yielded to it very readily. I wish Mr. Yard may find his account in the employment.

"I told the king, the concern your grace had of having the name of secretary, when you were not able to attend the service of the place, and that you thought the office had continued too

* One of the under secretaries in the office of secretary of state.

long already in the nature of a sinecure, and that it would not be possible it should be kept in this manner another winter; and yet, perhaps, it might not be for your honour, to give up the seals upon his return, which would be upon the opening of a session. I could get very little answer at that time, I suppose, because it was thought, a concession that your grace's opinion was reasonable, might have given me a pretence to have solicited for a disposal of the place.

"Some time after Mr. Secretary had mentioned the business of Spain to your grace, the king took occasion to speak of the great consequence it would be to England, that a man of quality and ability, one, that was known abroad to have credit with him, and had a fixed credit at home, should be sent to Spain. I had no suspicion of what it meant, and readily gave in to the notion. He then told me, he had ordered it to be proposed to your grace, not only as having all the qualifications, but as a thing, which would contribute, in your own opinion, to your health, and would be a very easy employment. He added, that the two last considerations had encouraged him to propose it to you, and that he expected your answer the next morning, and that, if you declined it, he should be of an opinion, that your grace (as he had long apprehended) would enter no more into his business. This last saying of his, made me heartily wish I could have had an opportunity of writing this passage to your grace; because it might have given you an occasion of expressing yourself somewhat differently in your answer, but there was no time for it, and you always write with that circumspection, that there was no occasion.

"The same proposition is made to my lord Wharton, and I am to propose it.

"My lord Orford is gone into the country. My lord Wharton is about his elections. Mr. Montague is sweating at his poll,* with Mr. Secretary,† against their great antagonist.‡

"As far as we yet hear, the elections are not for the worse. I hope things will succeed in Worcestershire, as you would have them.

* For Westminster. † Mr. Vernon. ‡ Sir Henry Colt.

"I owe you a thousand thanks, for thinking of such an immaterial thing to every body, as my health; but it is so very much impaired, that I must endeavour to recover it by some little retreat from my continued toil, at present, in hopes of an entire retirement to follow."

MR. MONTAGUE TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Anxious to meet him—The elections unfavourable.]

"*Aug.* 11-21, 1698.—My lord; I am very much obliged to your grace, for the several rendezvous you have given me, and since you intend to be at Winchendon, the latter end of this month, I will endeavour to wait upon you there. I had not much satisfaction in seeing you at a horse-race lately, but I hope Rainston will make an atonement for Newmarket. Lord Montague* has a design of inviting your grace to go from thence to Boughton. I have promised to be of the party, in hopes, since you are so idle, you will go a ramble, to see his water-works. These two rambles are as much as I can take this year, and if I can be so happy as to enjoy your company at these two places, I will take some other season to wait upon you, at your own houses.

"Lord Orford and I have not had an opportunity yet of discoursing what you commanded us. He has been in the country, and I have been confined; but, you may be assured, I shall give you my opinion, whenever you ask it, with all the freedom and friendship that I can.

"The elections have made a humour appear in the countries, that is not very comfortable to us, that are in business, for if the taxes have been so heavy, in a war against France and popery, they will be very uneasy, when the danger is thought farther off, with the expense that is necessary for an ordinary security; and if the king of Spain dies, who, I think, nobody hopes can live, Lord have mercy upon us! But yet, after all, the present members are such as will neither hurt England, or this government, but, I believe, they must be handled very nicely. I should be heartily glad to hear Walsh had succeeded.

"If I hear nothing to the contrary, I shall live in hopes of

*Ralph, afterwards duke of Montague.

seeing you at Winchendon and Boughton, and then I am sure I shall think them both very pleasant," &c.

THE EARL OF ORFORD TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Approves his mode of resigning the seals—Wishes to retire himself—Fearful that the kingdom is ill prepared for the expected event of the king of Spain's death.]

"*August* 16-26, 1698.—My lord; I was in the country when I received the honour of your grace's letter, of the 23rd of the last month. Upon my coming to town, I discoursed my lord chancellor on the subject you commanded, as to the time of your giving up the seals. He told me, he had received a letter from you, that you wrote him word, you had sent to the king, to know into whose hands the seals should be given. He did not believe, people would make the observations you apprehended they would, either if you had quitted the seals at the king's going, or if you kept them till near his return, but concluded, it will have a better air to do it, as you seem to determine, in your letter, between both. I believe every body must be of that mind. I have heard nothing bad of your health, therefore conclude you are well, which, I assure you, I rejoice at, as much as any servant you have. I shall wait on you at lord Wharton's, the 23rd. I never had more mind to follow your example, in quitting, than at this time, for I am quite weary of serving; but of this I will trouble you, when I wait on you.

"Here is no news, but that we daily expect to hear the king of Spain is dead. What will become of us then, God knows! I do not see the king has made any provision for such an accident, though often pressed to it, the neglect of which, in my poor opinion, will prove very fatal to England; and those people in business blamed, who could not help it. But I will not trouble you with this stuff, nor a longer letter, but conclude, with what you shall ever find me to be," &c.

"To-morrow, lord chancellor goes for Tunbridge. The king has done nothing about the duke of Glo'ster's settlement,* which makes lord Marlborough not a little uneasy."

* The settlement of the household for the young duke of Gloucester, presumptive heir to the throne, to whom the earl of Marlborough had been recently appointed governor. See Memoirs of the duke of Marlborough, ch. 6.

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Complains of the toil of business—Thinks that the most eligible time for his grace's resignation will be before the meeting of the parliament—Lord Wharton has declined going to Spain—Some of the duke's letters, when read to the king, had produced an unfavourable effect—Has in vain remonstrated against sending the french refugee troops to Ireland—The result of the elections more unfavourable than was expected.]

"*Aug.* 16-26, 1698.—My lord; I cannot but begin with my thanks, for your obliging injunction to me, to get away from business. I hope to obey you in a few days, by trying if I can find any quiet at Tunbridge. The truth is, the Chancery business (which ended but this day) is a toil, too great for any man to undergo, who has not much more strength of body and mind than I have.

"Since my lord Orford's coming to town, he acquainted us with your grace's letter. We all agreed in our thoughts, that since you had determined to part with the seals, the most proper time might be neither too suddenly, nor too near the parliament. What the king said about your declining business, was before he had your grace's answer, though he repeated it again, after.*

"Upon this occasion, allow me to say, what nothing but my nice concern for you could engage me to mention, that, perhaps, your grace does not think some of your letters should be read to the king, though the effect of them is to be told. I am sure, if any mistake of this kind has been committed, it was without any ill meaning, and, therefore, there must be no ill use made of it. I dare say the person† concerned, has the most true respect and duty to your grace, that it is possible for one man to have for another. But this hint may sometimes be a reason for you to change an expression in a letter, when it may probably be shewed.

"I was really afraid, my message to my lord Wharton‡ would have the effect, which your grace apprehended; and, therefore, in

---

* See page 550. † Mr. Vernon.

‡ The offer of the embassy to Spain.

concurrence with my lord Orford's opinion, to whom alone I mentioned the thing, I would not write what I had in charge, but reserved myself to tell it him, with the circumstances, and (as I thought) he did not take it altogether so ill, as I doubted he would, but directed me to make his excuse, upon the account of his family concern, his lady being big, and not far from an expectation of lying-in.

"The ordering the french troops for Ireland, is a most unaccountable thing. It was never owned, but I took occasion, from the common reports, to speak of it, in a manner, which, I believe, gave offence. Your grace mentions a great many unanswerable arguments against it. Amongst the reasons I used, one was, that I foresaw, it would certainly ruin my lord Galway, which I thought would have had some weight, but, I find other reasons were stronger.

"I am very much pleased with Mr. Walsh's success. I could not have imagined Mr. Bromley would have had so great a struggle for his coming in.*

"I am infinitely surprised to hear, it was possible to have a wrong impression made of your interposing in the Worcestershire elections, and shall be glad to have that matter explained, when I have the happiness of seeing you.

"My lord Wharton has met with but ill success in all his elections, which I am very sorry for. Upon the whole choice, I fear the parliament will be somewhat difficult to be dealt with, though several of the leading men of the opposite party are left out."

A letter from lord chancellor Somers, dated October 25, will shew that the affairs of Ireland were still in a no less embroiled situation than those of England. The difficulties which attended that government have been sufficiently manifested, by preceding observations, and by the correspondence with the king; and, though little reference to the subject has hitherto appeared in the letters of the whig chiefs, the state of Ireland proved a source of constant embarrassment.

* For the city of Worcester.

The commission appointed after the death of sir Charles Porter,* was not less inefficient than any of the preceding; for lord Villiers was absent, as plenipotentiary, at Ryswick, and the marquis of Winchester not only delayed the assumption of his irksome office, but even, when he arrived in Ireland, evinced a deficiency of those talents, which were requisite for its execution. The whole burthen of the government, therefore, rested on lord Galway, who, besides his disadvantages as a foreigner, was better fitted to superintend the discipline of camps, than to sway the contentions of party.

To remedy this weakness, the office of chancellor was, at the recommendation of lord Sunderland, conferred, by the king, on Mr. Methuen, a gentleman eminent for political knowledge and legal abilities, plausible in manners, and sanguine in disposition. Though great the difficulties which surrounded his predecessors, he was placed in still more critical circumstances; for, in addition to the frowardness, which formerly marked the conduct of the Irish people, they had recently shewn an unwonted spirit of independence; and this principle had been strongly asserted, in an able, but violent, publication, written by Mr. Molyneux, of Dublin, who was distinguished for the vigour of his style, and the acuteness of his arguments. Such pretensions awakened the jealousy of the english legislature, and not only a vote of censure was passed against this obnoxious production, but the refractory proceedings of the Irish parliament, in the former session, were strongly condemned, as emanating from the same source. Farther, to check the competition between the woollen fabrics of the two kingdoms, an address was presented, requesting the king, to take measures for the protection of the woollen manufacture, which was considered as the staple branch of the british trade. To make some amends, however, for this restriction, a recommendation was annexed, that similar regulations should be adopted, for the advantage of the linen manufacture, which was regarded as the peculiar and natural fabric of Ireland.

* See pp. 112, 113.

To the embarrassments which were likely to arise from these jarring interests of the two countries, was added another source of perplexity, derived from the anxiety of the king to keep on foot the foreign refugee regiments; for which purpose he had sent them into Ireland, in opposition to the remonstrances of the duke of Shrewsbury and lord Somers. It, therefore, required a man of no less discretion, than energy, to manage the Irish parliament, during the discussion of these delicate topics; and the sanguine temper, and confident promises, of Mr. Methuen had chiefly induced the king to appoint him chancellor, and to rely on him for the direction of Irish affairs.

The result did not fulfil the hopes, which had led to this arrangement. On the meeting of the Irish parliament, in the beginning of October, Mr. Methuen was alarmed by the powerful opposition, which was formed against the government, and not only hesitated to press the new regulation, relative to the linen and woollen manufacture, but laboured to throw the responsibility on the lords justices in England, by representing this obnoxious bill, as originating from them, and in opposition to his advice. The lords justices, on their part, endeavoured equally to avoid responsibility, by referring the decision to the king himself. A series of perplexing and acrimonious debates ensued, and the opposition attempted to thwart the measures of the chancellor, by anticipating the intended regulation relative to woollens, by opposing the grants for the pay of the troops, and by moving for the dismission of the foreign regiments. Their designs were, however, partially baffled. A supply of 138,000*l.* was obtained with some difficulty, but the regulations relative to the linen and woollen trade, were not carried to the extent, which appears to have been contemplated by the english government. The king was also mortified, by the rejection of a clause in the bill, for the preservation of his person, which reduced the act itself almost to a nullity.

The event of this stormy session was considered so unfavourable to England, that it was thought necessary to prorogue the Irish

parliament. Mr. Methuen, who had so confidently promised success, was, soon afterwards, dismissed from the post of chancellor, and the seals were put in commission.*

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On Irish affairs—On the bill for the encouragement of the linen manufacture—Opposition to the plan adopted with respect to the refugee regiments—Complains of the coldness of the king towards the whigs—Thinks the king and lord Sunderland are waiting to see what party will prevail—Objects to Mr. Montague's appointment as auditor of the exchequer—Solicits the advice of the duke.]

"*Oct. 25-Nov. 4*, 1698.—My lord; I have been very desirous of some tolerable pretence of troubling you with a letter, and, therefore, it is easy to believe, I was pleased to receive one from your grace, by Mr. Stone.†

"Since that time, Mr. Secretary shewed me what you wrote to him on the same subject. I understood your grace's sentiments in the same manner they were explained to him, and endeavoured to pursue them, by prevailing with the lords justices to send over the two bills, under distinct great seals, which was all that could be done; for they were, before, both agreed to at council, and ordered to be sent together, and were already ingrossed, and the warrant for the great seal signed. To bring this about, I was necessitated to shew my letter, from my lord Winchester and lord Galway, and to let Mr. Montague read your grace's, which I hope you will not be displeased with.

"The chancellor of Ireland wants, extremely, a pretence whereupon to lay the blame of the miscarriage of this session. He alone advised, and undertook for it, unless he had my lord Galway privately concurring with him. It is said my lord Coningsby came into this counsel at last; and, that his agreeing to go over, and make it effectual, got him to be sole paymaster. But I know

* From Kennett's History of William the Third, and Vernon's Correspondence with the duke of Shrewsbury.

† Mr. Stone had been sent by the lords justices, and chancellor of Ireland, to state the proceedings in the Irish parliament, and to request instructions for their conduct.

not how true this is, and, if I am rightly informed, the part he acts there is not very clear.

"This I am sure of, that, during the last session, by encouraging the king, that the french regiments should be provided for, and the new-formed establishment of a military list in Ireland should be made good, (which, I am told, amounts to 300,000*l.*) Mr. Methuen had more credit than any body, though the king knew he was equally the aversion of the whigs and tories, both here and in Ireland.

"At the same time the lords justices sent the bills for Ireland, they wrote a letter to my lord Winchester and lord Galway, in which they observed to them, that the bill for the impositions on the woollen manufacture did not take its rise here; that it was never heard of, till the chancellor mentioned it to all the lords justices here, as a thing in a sort agreed to, and, therefore, the most proper bill to be offered, for excluding the pretence of the sole right. That they told him, they could, in no sort, pretend to judge of that, and were only to let him know the king would have some one money-bill, transmitted in form, but it was left to the lords justices, and council in Ireland, to determine what it should be. The letter added, that we had no opinion of this bill in England, it being plain, that the duties were in no sort sufficient to bring the manufactures of the two kingdoms to a par; and that they were as capable of judging as we were, whether the bill for encouraging the linen manufacture was such a money-bill, as would, according to the king's intention, preserve his prerogative. We have also sent copies of their letter to us, and our answer to the king, desiring he would be pleased to send his orders upon the present prospect of things, in Ireland.

"Whether this will be enough to save us from the blame of spoiling the session in Ireland, I know not. But, I ought to tell your grace, what a sort of money-bill, that, about the linen, is. It grants nothing to the king, but lays some few pecuniary mulcts upon offenders, and directs the grand juries of the several counties to assess sums for building workhouses, which are to be levied in the usual manner, with other county payments. It is hardly to be

imagined, that the Commons of Ireland did ever pretend to the sole right of beginning such bills as these.

"By letters from Ireland, which came last night, it is said, that before the Commons went into the committee for the supply, there was a very hot debate, concerning an address for disbanding the french regiments, which was rejected by 29 votes. Then they went into the committee, where, with much opposition, it was carried for the sum asked, being one hundred and thirty-eight thousand and odd pounds. When this came into the House, the debate of the french was renewed, and it was carried by 30, for agreeing with the committee.

"On the other hand, in the committee of the whole House, upon the bill for the preservation of the king's person, it was carried by *ten*, to disagree with the first clause, which is the loss of the bill, unless it be rectified in the House. It is, in all appearance, a very ill omen of the session, to find such contests, and near divisions.

"As I understand, the first step they will make in the ways and means, is to lay the duties on the woollen manufacture, and you will be amazed (I fancy) to hear, that this is done by a secret management of the chancellor's, who pretends, underhand, that this bill is contrived in England, and was opposed by him, and that there is no other way to prevent its being sent to them, but to do the work themselves.

"I heartily ask pardon for taking up so much of your time with Ireland. Your grace's letter, on that subject, can only make an excuse for me. I will only add, it has long been my opinion, that I should not see that kingdom tolerably settled, till I saw your grace at the head of it.

"I do not mention this, with an impertinent design, to draw you from your retirement, much less to engage others to renew those sort of importunities, which have made you often uneasy, but to vent a thought of my own. But I hope you will allow me, since I have the misfortune to be yet engaged, to beg your advice for the public, and for myself. I ought to make great apologies for such a freedom, but I must own, it is only founded upon the hopes

I have, that your grace thinks I mean well, and am not capable of making an ill use of such a favour.

"Your grace knows how resolutely the king declined speaking of his business, to any in his service, all the winter, and that, in such a manner, as if he was not unwilling it should be known. I am sure it was known, and that it was an occasion of encouraging opposition, so as to make the session some months longer, than, in all probability, it otherwise would have been. He would in no sort declare himself before his leaving England, and, perhaps, upon a good reason, to see, first, which faction would have the majority in a new parliament.

"Whether the choice be such as that the same reason will oblige him to sit still longer, till he sees which party will prevail, upon the struggle, is not easy to determine. It is a nice question, in what temper the session will open. The choice was upon a very ill foot; the complaints of taxes and offices, may mislead many well-intentioned gentlemen. There is not, at present, a face of government; and every body seeing the little credit those have with the king, who are in employments, are naturally invited to endeavour to ruin or expose them.

"If we had our wishes, it were hard to find men of business. But, when the prejudices to some are considered, and the fondnesses for others of a different party, it seems ridiculous to attempt things, manifestly impracticable. And the temper of our friends, added to all other considerations, makes one quite despair.

"Were not the difficulty equal, in finding a number of tories, capable of uniting, I take it for granted, the whigs would, long since, have been laid aside. But that my lord Sunderland has not yet found, at least of such a party, as could join with him.

"The business of Mr. Montague gives me great disquiet. It was done much on the sudden, without the advice or knowledge of many of his best friends. I wish it may turn well for himself, but I do not see how it can turn well for the public. If he quits the Treasury, somebody, wholly of another sort, will succeed. If he keeps both places, I fear it will be a new subject of envy.

"I find myself running on without end. I will choose to leave off, before I have said half I wish to do, upon this reason, that you know our case much better than I can tell it. If your grace will have the goodness to let me know some of your thoughts upon our present circumstances, what is to be attempted, in general, and what part I ought to take in it, it would be an inexpressible favour. If I have gone too far in my request, I heartily ask your pardon, and shall ever be," &c.

An allusion is made in this letter to a singular and unexpected proceeding of Mr. Montague. Apprehensive that the whig ministry was hastening to a dissolution, he was desirous to secure an honourable retreat, whenever he should deem it prudent to withdraw from his active duties. The opportunity which he had long anxiously sought, presented itself, on the death of sir Robert Howard, auditor of the exchequer, in the beginning of the preceding September. This lucrative office being, however, incompatible with his post in the Treasury, he formed the design of vesting it in a representative, till the change, which he contemplated, should take place. As it was in the gift of the Treasury-board, he addressed himself to his colleagues, sir Thomas Lyttleton and Mr. Smith, and, with their concurrence, granted it to his brother, Christopher Montague, without any previous application to the king, or communication with the other ministers. This precipitate measure astonished his friends, who readily divined his object, and, doubtless, occasioned equal surprise to the king, who naturally expected to have been consulted. Montague possessed, however, too much influence to be defeated in his purpose. His friends, who were satisfied with his promise, that he would not immediately withdraw from the Treasury, strenuously exerted themselves in his favour; and, accordingly, after some delay, the king was induced to confirm an arrangement, which he could scarcely approve, and yet was unable to prevent. The ensuing letter, from Mr. Montague, himself, conveys a request, that the duke of Shrewsbury would interfere to obtain the royal consent to this arrangement.

MR. MONTAGUE TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Will not press him to defer his resignation—Solicits his interest with the king, for the auditorship of the exchequer.]

* "My lord; I cannot forbear adding one word, to what my lord Wharton will say to you by this post. Your grace may observe a great nicety in your friends, to press you to any thing, contrary to the assurances they have all given you, but you may easily know their inclinations; but, for myself, you may judge of what consequence it would be, that you were here, but to speak one word to the king, when my fortune may be easily settled, if he pleases. Why should you not come to some place, within a convenient distance, and not into London. If you liked Hampton Court, you might be very well accommodated; see your friends, and the king; suffer nothing from the air of the town, and stay as long, or as little time, as you thought convenient. If any thing of this kind would please you, I will contrive it shall be perfectly easy to you, but I must beg of you, that if it will not hurt your health, you will give me your assistance at this juncture, in which every thing looks so fair, that if I am not very ill used, I shall be as easy as I desire. Pray, if I have suggested any thing that you like, give me your commands. You may be lodged, either in the house, or in the under-keeper's house, where the duke of Bolton used to be."

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Thinks lord Peterborough will scarcely venture to resume his cabals against the duke—Assures his grace of the support of the king and government—Regrets his retirement from office, and thinks his intervention might have formed a practicable system of administration—Will fix himself at Althorp.]

"*Althorp, Nov. 25-Dec. 5.*†—My lord; I was in hopes your new doctor would have had better success, than I find by your letter, of the 21st; but what remedies will not do; I believe

* Without date, but evidently written in the beginning of November; because, from the endorsement, it appears to have been answered on the 12th.

† Without the date of the year, but probably written in 1698.

country air and quiet will. I cannot imagine my lord P——* can be so mad as to revive a thing, which, when new, had such a reception as that had. If he should, it is certain it will hurt nobody but himself; but I agree entirely with you, that nothing can recompense for such uneasinesses, but I think they are to be prevented, by safe and honourable means, with the king's help, and, I believe, you may be sure of the uttermost protection in all cases, that he and the government can give. I dare say you cannot doubt him, nor, I think, any body about him, and, when there is such a concurrence, it is very strong.

"If you had been able to have continued, and that five or six could have trusted one another, in their common interest, which one would think not impossible, many things might have been offered, in such cases, as well as in others, to have carried on the public business, and to have made people, that are engaged in it, easier than I have ever seen them. But you are gone, and, I am sure, that unless that changes, I will think of nothing but dispatching my own private affairs, as soon as is possible, and fix here, where, if I can be quiet, I shall envy no man.

"Five or six weeks ago, I had a letter brought to me from my lord P——.† It had no date of time or place, but in it he said, he was in this country, and mentioned coming hither, as what he would do, if he considered only himself: that he avoided company, was a philosopher, and very easy in his own concerns. To which I answered, that I was fit for nothing, for many reasons, but that his circumstances were quite different, &c. I heard no more, nor did he appear any where, but he certainly was about Drayton.‡

"In the beginning of the summer, I had two letters from him, about a man he had a mind to take, who had served me. There was in them, besides, a good deal against the present men employed, but nothing particular, and much of compliment to me and kind-

* Peterborough. † Probably lord Peterborough.

‡ A seat belonging to lord Peterborough in Northamptonshire.

ness, which I have deserved, if giving good and friendly advice were the way, for that I have done very plainly, and very often, which, though he seldom follows, I cannot yet think it possible, he should again fall into what he suffered for so many ways.

"I hope nobody will ever press you again to venture your health, or to live uneasily; but I will not despair of seeing you both healthy and easy, since you do not go out of England."

CHAPTER 8.

1698—1699.

Resignation of the duke of Shrewsbury, and his refusal to accept the staff of chamberlain—Meeting of the new parliament—Choice of a whig speaker—Continued misunderstanding between the king and the whigs—Discontent in the lower House, at the conduct of the king—Farther reduction of the forces—Dismission of the dutch guards—William forms the resolution of withdrawing from England.—His interview with lord Somers—Dissuaded from his purpose—Fruitless efforts of the whigs to prevent the reduction of the army—Ineffectual appeal of the king, to avert the dismission of his dutch guards—Lord Orford attacked by the tories—Appointment of lord Jersey as secretary of state—Overture from the king to the whigs—Shrewsbury solicited to mediate, and accept a post in a new system of administration—Waits on the king at Newmarket and Windsor—Discontent and sudden resignation of lord Orford—Retirement of lord Portland, and favour of lord Albemarle—Intended retreat of Montague from the Treasury-board—Compromise effected by the mediation of Shrewsbury—Ministerial arrangements—Correspondence from December, 1698, to March, 1699.

THE first event, which now claims our notice, is the retirement of the duke of Shrewsbury from the office of secretary. On the arrival of William from the continent, on the 3rd of December, he again renewed his solicitations, through the agency of Mr. Vernon, but his purpose was still resisted with the same pertinacity as before. After repeatedly refusing to permit his resignation, unless he would accept the vacant post of chamberlain, the king at length desisted from fruitless importunity; and on the 12th his badge of office was formally delivered by Mr. Vernon. No successor, however, was indicated, for the king was unwilling to excite a new feud, by an immediate choice; and the whigs, from wounded pride, abstained from resuming their project for obtaining the appointment of Wharton.*

* See the correspondence with the king, chapter 8, p. 184.

A few days before the resignation of the duke of Shrewsbury, the new parliament assembled. In the choice of a Speaker, the first and most important proceeding of the session, the whigs were gratified. However offended with their party, the king could not give his countenance to a tory candidate, while the helm of state was directed by a whig ministry: and sir Thomas Lyttleton was, accordingly, called to the chair, on the 9th of December, not, indeed, without opposition, though no competitor was named, but by a majority of 242 against 135.

The first session of the new parliament opened under the most gloomy auspices; and, as on the former occasion, the state of the army engrossed the hopes and fears of both parties. Unfortunately, the conduct of the king had tended to increase, rather than dissipate, popular clamour. Confident in his own integrity, sensible of the necessity of a powerful military force, to balance that of France, and relying on the gratitude of the nation, for his services, in preserving its religion and liberties, he had not only taken no measures to comply with the vote of the preceding session, but had even evinced a disposition to evade it, by sending a part of the foreign troops to Ireland.

Notwithstanding his dissatisfaction with the whigs, and the unfavourable result of the elections, he still hoped that they would successfully exert themselves, to prevent the reduction of the forces; though, with singular impolicy, he manifested towards them the same sullen reserve as before his departure; and did not even condescend to specify the number of troops he wished to maintain. In his speech to the parliament, he adopted a more guarded style than at the commencement of the preceding session. After expressing his conviction, "that they were met together with hearts fully disposed to do what was necessary to the safety, welfare, and happiness of the kingdom," he simply recommended two subjects to their consideration. "First, the strength which ought to be maintained at sea, and the force kept up by land, the ensuing year; and, secondly, the proper measures for accelerating the discharge of the public debt, contracted during the war."

But William had little calculated on the temper of the times; and the jealousy of a free people, presumptuously confident in past successes, and misled by the artifices of faction. The first proceedings proved the fatal error into which he had fallen. Though the peers, as before, replied in a loyal address, the Commons, instead of following the example, proceeded, without their usual attention to the sovereign, to consider the state of the army. On the 16th of December, the dreaded retrenchment was carried, on a motion, by Mr. Harley, for reducing the military force in England to 7,000, and in Ireland to 12,000 men. The servants of the crown, having no proposition to offer from the king, submitted in silence; though it was generally supposed, that an intimation of the royal wish, might have induced the House to consent to the establishment of 10,000 men for England, granted in the preceding year. The jealousy of the commons was still farther evinced, by the exclusion of all foreigners, under the express specification, that the army should consist only of natural-born troops.

These preliminary observations, for which we are principally indebted to Mr. Vernon's letters, will serve to supply the information wanting in this part of the correspondence. We cannot, however, omit adverting to another subject, to which allusions will occur. We mean the affair of the pirate, captain Kidd, already mentioned in the correspondence with the king, and which, at this time, caused the utmost embarrassment to the duke of Shrewsbury and the ministry.

The frequent depredations committed in the seas of the East and West Indies, by pirates, who found encouragement in the American colonies, had long been a source of complaint. Repeated representations had been made on the subject; but the british government was too deeply engaged in the french war, to take efficient precautions for the suppression of the evil. When, however, lord Bellamont was appointed to the government of New York, he, in conjunction with 'colonel Livingston, a distinguished officer of the colony, suggested the plan of fitting out a private ship of war, against these lawless depredators. They

selected, for the conduct of the enterprise, captain Kidd, an active and spirited seaman, of respectable character and connections, who had formerly commanded a privateer, and was then settled at New York.

The scheme was communicated to the lord chancellor Somers, the duke of Shrewsbury, and lord Orford, and received their approbation. Accordingly, they joined with lord Bellamont, colonel Livingston, and Kidd himself, in raising a subscription of 6,000*l.*, for the purchase and outfit of a ship. At the instance of the duke of Shrewsbury, the royal sanction was obtained; and the king even consented to defray one half of the expense, but he never advanced the money, though, as usual, he reserved to himself one tenth of the profits which might accrue.

Kidd sailed to the eastern seas, in 1696; but, instead of fulfilling the instructions of his employers, he captured two vessels, chiefly manned with moors, and said to belong to the subjects of the Great Mogul. Being, soon afterwards, deserted by a part of his crew, who joined other bands of pirates, he burnt his own ship, and sailed in one of his prizes to the West Indies. Having obtained provisions and supplies from Curacoa, he purchased an American sloop, and, leaving his prize, with a part of the goods, under the charge of some of his crew, he coasted the American shores, disposing of his cargo. In this traffic he finally reached Boston.

As soon as his piracies were discovered, orders for his seizure were issued by the british government. He, however, so far relied on his former connection with lord Bellamont, as to make some attempt to obtain indemnity for his offences: but he was lured into a negotiation, and, in June, 1699, taken into custody. Information of his arrest being transmitted to the government, the Rochester was dispatched, to convey him and the plundered property to England, but was driven back to Plymouth by contrary winds. In the mean time the affair attracted public attention, and the feeling it excited was heightened by the clamours of the old East India Company, who did not neglect so favourable a plea, for casting odium on the ministry, in resentment

for their patronage of a rival establishment. As the duke of Shrewsbury foreboded, it became, in the next session, a subject of the most serious inquiry.

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Sir Thomas Lyttleton chosen speaker—Reconciliation of the whigs with secretary Vernon—Has apologised to the king, for the departure of the duke, without delivering the seals in person—Manly advice to his majesty, on his conduct towards the ministry—Kidd's affair—Misunderstanding among the whig chiefs.]

"*Dec.* 15.*—My lord; Since I had the honour of your grace's of the 3rd, sir Thomas Lyttleton's affair is over, with great success, and (which I am not a little pleased at) so much to Mr. Secretary's advantage,† as I have turned it, that he has had the particular thanks of my lords Orford and Wharton, and of Mr. Montague and Mr. Smith; and I think, all sort of suspicion is so far removed as never to revive, but upon new occasions, which, I am well assured, Mr. Secretary will cautiously prevent.

"The natural consequence of such a success, was, from thence to take occasion to say, every thing that was aimed at might be effected. I have endeavoured plainly to rectify that error, by saying, though gentlemen with indignation rejected a proposal so openly to his dishonour, as to put an avowed enemy‡ at the head of the House of Commons; yet they would be at liberty in other things, and that I knew no way of dealing with a new House of Commons, but proceeding nicely, and letting them conceive much was left to themselves. Our friends have spoken after the same manner, but with little effect.

"I acquainted the king, according to your command, of your coming to town, with a purpose of waiting upon him, and of your great trouble, when your health would not suffer you to stay long enough to see him. That I found your purpose was, to put

* Without the date of the year, but endorsed by the duke of Shrewsbury "Lord Chancellor Somers, Dec. 15th;—answered 19th." It evidently belongs to the year 1698.

† Mr. Vernon. See the introduction to the last chapter.

‡ Either sir Edward Seymour, or sir Christopher Musgrave, both violent tories.

the seals into his hands yourself, as you thought was most decent. He expressed himself much concerned, and spoke with great kindness and respect of you. He said, he would not dis-ease you, but that he knew not what to do. He asked, twice or thrice together, what he should do with the seals. I said, I had formerly troubled him with discourses upon that subject, which did not seem to please him; that I had nothing now to say, but that the government suffered, at present, manifestly for want of vigour; that he had not enough men of business about him; that he had need to make his administration as strong as he could; that this could not be done, till the people saw that the men he employed had the credit with him; and that it was better he should take any sort of men, with whom he would exert himself, than to let things languish, as they now seemed to do.

"I understand he has talked since to my lord Orford, about the secretary. I should be very much pleased to know your sentiments, what is proper to say, and whom to mention, if occasions offer. It was my great misfortune to expect some good opportunity, before you went back into the country, and by your sudden journey to be disappointed. But, for the general good, as well as in charity to myself, I hope you will let me receive your instructions, which I shall esteem an invaluable kindness. Nothing can seem to be more kind than the king is at present to all our friends, but I fear the business of the army will change all that again.

"As to Kidd's business, it is certain the old East India Company are contriving to make the most malicious use of it they can. Upon your grace's letter, I got my lord Rumney and my lord Orford to meet Harrison at my house; and we agreed in directing him, according to your grace's notion, to own freely, if he were sent for by the House of Commons, who were concerned with him, and to tell the whole fact sincerely, in which we hope there can be no crime, though perhaps we may appear somewhat ridiculous. We also intend to inform some of our friends of the circumstances of fact, that they may be a little prepared to speak to it.

"The king seems well disposed in Mr. Montague's affair,* if it can be brought about, without breaking his business, which I fear will be very difficult.

"There does nothing as yet appear, from whence the least umbrage can be observed in my lord Wharton. As to Mr. Montague, my lord Orford and I have talked of that matter, and we think, that, if my lord Orford took an opportunity of dropping a caution to him, against being surprised into a suspicion of his friends, it might be of service; and yet, if he should go farther than was fit or prudent, in speaking of it again to the person, nothing could be applied to your grace. You will be pleased to say if this method be right. I must beg pardon for this unreasonable length. I am, with the utmost truth," &c.

We now offer to the reader one of the most important documents in this interesting collection, which is no less remarkable, as it regards the character and feelings of William, than as authentic evidence of an historical fact, which is not the least singular in our domestic annals.

By the former narratives, and the preceding letters, the reader is acquainted with the embarrassed situation of the cabinet, the mutual irritation which subsisted between the king and ministers, and the temper manifested by the new House of Commons, on the reduction of the army.

The disappointment and chagrin, which the king conceived at the preliminary steps of that measure, were greatly aggravated in its progress. However offended with the whigs, for the exclusion of Sunderland, and for the perpetual bickerings created by the pretensions of Wharton, he had fondly cherished the hope, that they would secure the maintenance of a military force, sufficient to rescue his government from danger, and his name from contempt; and this hope was much strengthened by the triumphant majority, which had placed sir Thomas Lyttleton in the chair of the House of Commons. Great, therefore, was his mortification,

* His scheme for securing the auditorship of the exchequer. See p. 561.

to observe, either their unwillingness or inability to prevent the threatened reduction; to find that the resolution of the House of Commons was embodied into a law, with unusual rapidity; and, that not only the foreign troops, in general, but even his brave and faithful dutch guards, were to be ignominiously dismissed. In the height of his indignation, he did not spare the most vehement censures against the whigs, at whose instances he had accepted the crown; and he formed the hasty, though natural, resolution of abandoning a country, where he had experienced such a shameful desertion; and of leaving to their own wilful passions, a people who had ungratefully humbled him in the eyes of Europe. This resolution he communicated, with all the warmth of wounded honour, to lord Somers, who thus relates the interview:

"*Dec.* 29, 1698.—My lord; Your grace did extreme rightly judge where the difficulty would lie upon our friends, that is, in the point of the army. Their success in the Speaker gave occasion to some to say, every thing was possible, which they would attempt in good earnest. And the same persons are hearkened to, when they say, that their conduct, upon the debate in the House of Commons, was so far from aiming at what the king desired, that it was a downright delivering him up.

"This has put the king upon great extremities in his purposes, as I doubt not your grace may have heard before this time. I have not acquainted you with his resolution sooner, because I thought it could not be taken up in good earnest. But I have had, this morning, such a sort of confirmation of it, that I cannot think it possible to have it carried on so far, if it be meant but as an appearance only, and to provoke us to exert ourselves.

"His resolution is, when the next Wednesday's business is over, to come to the parliament, and tell them, that he came over to rescue the nation from the ruin impending over them, in which he succeeded, and had brought them to the end of a dangerous war, without any great misfortune; that now they had peace, and might provide for their own safety; that he saw they were enter-

taining distrusts and jealousies of him, so as not to do what was necessary for themselves; that he was, therefore, determined to leave England, but, before he went, would consent to any law they should offer, for appointing commissioners of both Houses, to administer the government, and, then they would not be jealous of themselves.

"When he first mentioned this to me, I treated the notion as the most extravagant and absurd, that ever was entertained, and begged him to speak of it to nobody, for his own honour. He heard me patiently talk against it, for two hours, but concluded at last, as of a notion he still retained.

"He has spoken of it to my lord Marlborough (which one would wonder at, almost as much as at the thing itself), Mr. Montague, and to my lord Orford, and, I believe, to divers others. The last time I saw him, he would not suffer me to argue with him, telling me plainly, he saw we should never agree, and he was resolved. I told him, I hoped he would take the seal from me, before he did it; that I had it from him, when he was king, and desired he would receive it from me, while he was so.

"I should tell your grace, that, upon a meeting with Mr. Secretary, lord Coningsby, and divers others of the House of Commons, we all agreed in an opinion, that this business of the army could not be carried higher than 10,000, and that with the utmost difficulty, and not unless the country gentlemen would enter into the debate, which they would never do, unless it might be said to them, that it would be an acceptable service to the king, and that he would make the best of that number.

"When this was told him, he was very much dissatisfied, and said, he could not say a thing, which was but to deceive us, that he would leave all to Providence, having taken his resolution, and would go to Windsor, and stay till Saturday.

"What fruit the king is made to believe he may expect from such a proceeding, I know not, nor who are the movers to it. I think it infinitely prejudicial to him, and ruinous to the whole. I think, also, there is an extreme difficulty upon all our friends, who will, in the conclusion, fall under censure, however they act in this matter.

"I never wished for a thing, so passionately, in my life, as to have half an hour's discourse with your grace, upon the subject. Is it not possible that I might receive a line or two of your's, before this critical business is to come on? This is so considerable an incident, that I do not, at present, enter into the giving you my particular thanks, for the good advice in the last letter, which I had the honour to receive from your grace. I am sensible of it, as I ought to be, and will endeavour to make the best use of it, if the king's purpose does not put me upon the necessity of being in no capacity of making any use of advice of such a nature.

"I do not know what Monsieur Tallard has said to the king, upon the news from Spain. He had an audience on Friday last. But I am told, from a very good hand, that at the court of France it is said, this resolution of the catholic king's will make void the late treaty.* Whatsoever the french king may have in his purpose, I take for granted, will not appear till after the winter is over. I am with all possible sincerity and respect," &c.

The following is a copy of the speech, which king William intended to make to the parliament,† inclosed in the preceding letter from lord Somers:

"I came into this kingdom, at the desire of the nation, to save it from ruin, and to preserve your religion, your laws, and liberties. And, for that end, I have been obliged to maintain a long and burthensome war, for this kingdom, which, by the grace of God, and the bravery of this nation, is at present ended in a good peace, under which you may live happily and in quiet, provided you will contribute towards your own security, in the manner I had recommended to you, at the opening of the sessions. But seeing to the contrary, that you have so little regard to my advice, that you take no manner of care of your own security, and that you expose

* Alluding to the first partition treaty, which was signed Oct. 11, 1698; and to the resolution consequently adopted by Charles the Second, king of Spain, of bequeathing his whole succession to the electoral prince of Bavaria.

† Printed in Dalrymple, part iii. b. 7, p. 180, but could not be omitted here, from its connection with the preceding letter.

yourselves to evident ruin, by divesting yourselves of the only means for your defence, it would not be just or reasonable, that I should be witness of your ruin, not being able to do any thing of myself to prevent it, it not being in my power to defend and to protect you, which was the only view I had in coming into this country. Therefore, I am obliged to recommend to you, to choose, and name to me, such persons as you shall judge most proper, to whom I may leave the administration of the government, in my absence, assuring you, that though I am at present forced to withdraw myself out of the kingdom, I shall always preserve the same inclination for its advantage and prosperity; and when I can judge that my presence will be necessary for your defence, I shall be ready to return, and hazard my life for your security, as I have formerly done, beseeching the great God to bless your deliberations, and to inspire you with all that is necessary for the good and security of the kingdom."

The intrepid and manly remonstrances of the chancellor, induced the king to forego his hasty resolution of withdrawing from England; but no representations could soothe his resentment against the whigs, for suffering their opponents to carry so odious a measure, as the reduction of the army. A deep sense of the royal displeasure, appeared to stimulate their zeal, but, when brought to the trial, they again shrunk from the contest, and suffered the bill to proceed, without a division. An attempt was, indeed, finally made to raise the intended establishment in England to 10,000 men, by proposing, that the number should be reconsidered in the committee: but this effort was feebly supported, and the proposal treated with contempt by the king, who considered so inadequate an addition as totally inefficient. At the last reading of the bill, however, an unexpected revulsion of sentiment appears to have taken place, among the independent members, and the measure encountered greater opposition than in any stage of its progress; but its advocates were still triumphant, for it was carried, on the 19th of January, by a division of 221 against 154.

While the bill was making its progress through the Lords, measures were adopted by the Commons, for carrying its provisions into effect. A sum of 300,000*l.* was granted for the expenses of disbanding the troops, and a vote of credit passed for raising that supply, without delay.

Hopes were entertained, that the bill would be arrested in the upper house, where a spirit of genuine patriotism still prevailed; but, although many of the peers expressed their disapprobation of the measure, they were deterred by the fear of a controversy with the Commons, and it ultimately passed, without a division.

Unable to stem the torrent of faction, the king stifled his indignation, and submitted to a disappointment, which he could not prevent. But, in announcing the royal assent, he testified a deep sense of the ingratitude he had experienced, and made an earnest appeal to the loyalty of the nation, by throwing on the authors of the measure the awful responsibility, which they had incurred.* This manly and indignant appeal made a considerable impression, both on the parliament and the country; and hopes seem to have been entertained, that the Commons might be persuaded to acquiesce in the continuance of the dutch guards, which would have removed the appearance of personal insult to the sovereign. But the victorious party were too vigilant to suffer this impression to work its effect. For, on the 9th of February, Harley anticipated the design, by proposing the consideration of the royal speech, and persuaded the House to agree to an address of unmeaning compliment, without the slightest reference to the request of the king. To obviate the complaint, that the nation was left in a state of insecurity, he brought forward his plan for rendering the militia more effective.

Notwithstanding this indication of the temper of the House, the king, contrary to the advice of his ministers, made another effort to save the dismission of his dutch guards. On the 18th of March, he sent a message to the Commons, through Mr. secretary Vernon, written in his own hand, stating, that he had made preparations for

* See his speech of the 1st Feb. 1698-9, Journals.

dismissing the guards, who had accompanied him to England, unless, from consideration to him, the House would find a way for continuing them longer in his service, which his majesty would take very kindly. But the result of this affecting, though humiliating address, was such as the ministry had foretold. It was opposed by Harley, the organ of the opposition, and a reply was voted, not only rejecting the request, but conveying an indirect reproach to the king, for his want of confidence in his english subjects, and the breach of his promise to dismiss all foreign troops, contained in his declaration, soon after his landing. A vigorous attempt was, indeed, made, to prevent this glaring insult, but, on two successive divisions it was carried by a small majority.*

While these stormy discussions were pending, a vigorous attack was made against the whigs, in the person of the earl of Orford, by an inquiry into the conduct of the admiralty. In the course of the debates, reflections were not spared on the two incompatible offices of treasurer of the navy, and first commissioner of the admiralty, which he united in himself; but the tories having gained their principal object, in the reduction of the troops, appear to have become lukewarm in the pursuit of inferior points, and the charge was finally repelled, though by a majority of only four, Harley withdrawing before the division, and Foley voting in favour of the admiralty-board.

The events of the session, and the dangers into which the country was plunged, by the struggles of faction, made a deep impression both on the king and ministers. The king seems to have been fully convinced, that he could not carry on his government, without the assistance of the whigs; but, even this consideration did not induce him to gratify their wishes in favour of Wharton. He, therefore, precluded all farther importunities, by announcing his intention of conferring the vacant seals of secretary of state, on the earl of Jersey, who had lately filled the office of

* A motion for the recommittal of the address, negatived by 175 against 156. Another on the expression, relative to the king's declaration, negatived by 163 against 157.

plenipotentiary at the Hague, and embassador in France, with great credit, but was ranked among the most ardent of the tories.

Having evinced his inflexible resolution on this critical point, he made an overture to the lord chancellor, by declaring his conviction, that the hostilities of the tories, in the House of Commons, had been levelled against himself, and expressing a wish for some arrangement, which might give strength and consistency to his government. Shrewsbury, as before, was appealed to on this occasion, and requested to accept a post in the intended ministry, or, at least, to assist by his advice and mediation. Though discouraged by the unfavourable result of all his former attempts, and though fully appreciating the difficulty of the task, he yielded to the commands of the sovereign, and the importunities of his friends, and consented to wait on the king, at Newmarket, in the beginning of April. No definitive settlement being then accomplished, the negotiation was continued at Windsor, whither Shrewsbury repaired, towards the beginning of the ensuing month. As if by mutual consent, the pretensions both of Wharton and Sunderland seem to have been superseded. The great difficulty now lay in the arrangement of a new board of admiralty, and this was, apparently, as impracticable a task, as that of reconciling the jarring claims to the post of secretary. Notwithstanding the meritorious services of Orford, he had given offence, by uniting, in his own person, the posts of first commissioner of the admiralty, and treasurer of the navy; and, though he had, with such difficulty parried the attacks made against him, in the House of Commons, the joint efforts of his friends scarcely sufficed to extort from him a consent to relinquish the inferior, but more profitable office. His ungovernable temper, however, was no sooner curbed in one instance, than it sought its gratification in another. A series of perpetual disputes, between him and sir George Rooke, a tory admiral, who had also a seat at the board, had been recently inflamed into irreconcileable animosity, by the lukewarm conduct of the latter, during the late attacks on the admiralty. Orford, therefore, was determined to compensate for the sacrifice

which he had reluctantly made, by insisting on the power of nominating a new board, with the view of excluding his rival.

This question now became the hinge, on which the arrangement turned, and at the time, when the union of the whigs was so essentially necessary, Orford manifested his characteristic intractability, and did not conceal his resolution to resign, if he could not accomplish his object. In fact, while Shrewsbury, the chancellor, and Mr. Montague, were labouring to effect some compromise, he suddenly frustrated the whole scheme, by repairing to Kensington, on the 15th of May, and resigning his office, though the king himself condescended to apologise for sir George Rooke. This resolution was executed with such secrecy, that the lord chancellor, and even Mr. Montague, who accompanied him to Kensington, disavowed any previous knowledge of his design.*

A change which, about this period, took place in the private circle of the king, gave a new aspect to the court, and created additional difficulties. Lord Portland, who had enjoyed the royal confidence, and who had espoused the interest of the whigs, had been recently supplanted in favour, by Arnold Joost Von Keppel, a nobleman of Guelderland, who, after distinguishing himself in a military capacity, had risen from the office of private secretary of the king, to great distinction, and was elevated to the british peerage, by the title of earl of Albemarle. His amenity of manners was strongly contrasted with the reserved and repulsive deportment of Portland; and he speedily became the channel of court favour, and the organ of communication with his royal master. Though he affected impartiality, he was secretly inclined to the tories, and had essentially contributed to the elevation of the earl of Jersey, with whom he was in habits of the strictest intimacy. Portland feeling it useless to struggle against his superior interest, at this period, resigned his confidential post of groom of the stole, and thus left his rival in undisputed possession of the royal favour.

Albemarle was too important a personage to remain neuter in the present crisis; and we find him expressing the greatest respect for the integrity of the duke of Shrewsbury, and offering

* Mr. Vernon to the duke of Shrewsbury, May 16, 1699.

his assistance in the promotion of any scheme, which his grace might be enabled to suggest, for the service of the king.

Before, however, the business of the Admiralty could be settled, a new difficulty arose, with regard to the Treasury. Montague, who had foreseen the approaching dissolution of the whig ministry, now disclosed the motive for his eagerness to secure the reversion to the place of auditor of the exchequer, by announcing his intention of withdrawing from his seat at the head of the Treasury Board. The mischiefs of such a change, in the present unsettled state of the government, were, however, so obvious, that he was persuaded to suspend his design, and consented to remain as first Commissioner of the Treasury, on condition that his friend and colleague, Mr. Smith, should be appointed chancellor of the Exchequer.

By the assistance of Shrewsbury, a species of compromise was at length effected, which, though it promised little stability to the government, and little satisfaction to the parties concerned, was yet the only settlement, which could be effected, between the jealousies of the king, and the demands of the whigs. The presidency of the council was transferred from the duke of Leeds, to the earl of Pembroke, and the privy seal was given to lord Lonsdale. Lord Tankerville was solicited to accept the first seat at the board of admiralty, but, declaring that "he would prefer being drawn through a horse pond," it was reluctantly taken by the earl of Bridgewater, at the earnest entreaties of the king. The remaining places at the board were consigned to lord Haversham, sir George Rooke, sir Robert Rich, and sir David Michel. A new and unusual constitution was given to the Treasury, by the appointment of the earl of Tankerville, though a peer, as second commissioner under Mr. Montague, and Mr. Smith was confirmed in the office of chancellor of the exchequer.*

* Beatson and Musgrave fix the appointment of Mr. Smith on the 15th of November; but, by Vernon's letters, we are informed that he kissed hands on the 30th of May; and, from the Journals of the Treasury, we find the new board established on the 1st of June, and the warrant of Mr. Smith's appointment, as chancellor, passed on the 27th. By favour of Clayton Freeling, esq., private secretary to the chancellor of the exchequer.

Sir Thomas Lyttleton was removed from the Treasury, to fill the vacant office of treasurer of the navy, which he was permitted to hold, with that of Speaker of the House of Commons. Before these arrangements were completed, the parliament was prorogued, on the 4th of May, and the king, having nominated a commission of lords justices, in which lord Lonsdale, lord Bridgewater, and lord Jersey were introduced, in place of the earls of Dorset, Romney, and Orford, departed for the continent, on the 2nd of June, leaving the government in the hands of a more feeble and motley administration, than had existed since the commencement of his reign.*

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Has recommended the dean of Worcester to be bishop of that see—The king considers the attack of the tories as levelled against himself—Is anxious for the return of the duke of Shrewsbury to office.]

"*March* 30-*April* 9, 1699.—My lord; I had your grace's letter of the 18th instant, and was exceedingly pleased that it gave me a pretence of troubling you with one of mine, which I long had a great desire to do. I took the first opportunity I could get, of mentioning the dean of W——† to the king, and told him what your grace thought of him. The king expressed himself very sensible of the necessity of having a good man in that country, indeed, beyond what I expected from him, as to his opinion of the county; and bid me discourse the archbishop, when I saw a proper time. Not long after I made the archbishop a visit, on purpose to introduce a discourse of this subject; and, by all that I could infer, I suspect he will not be forward to enter into this matter. He said this, 'the dean was very young, and Worcester 'too good a bishopric to begin with.' He was, as I thought, unusually cold, but put it off upon the account of the bishop's being in some measure recovered, and that, therefore, it was improper

* We have, as before, chiefly drawn this narrative from the letters of Mr. Vernon; and it is singular, that these transactions should either have been passed over in silence, or imperfectly represented by most of our national historians.

† The dean of Worcester, Dr. Talbot, who was promoted, on the translation of Dr. Howe, to Litchfield and Coventry.

to be disposing of his bishopric. But the bishop* falling, soon after, extremely ill again, I began to talk with him another time; and, though he was in no sort clear with me, I believe his thoughts are fixed otherwise; that the bishop of Litchfield and Coventry should remove to W———, the bishop of Oxford succeed him, and Dr. Wake to supply his place. This change, I think, will not be right; the bishop of Litchfield and Coventry being so old, and the bishop of Oxford's relations, and acquaintance, in Staffordshire, not well disposed to the government, as I am informed.

"The troublesome trials I have been engaged in (and which, in truth, almost killed me) have made it impossible for me to have an occasion of speaking with the archbishop, since the death of the bishop of W———, which I will not fail to do, as soon as I can go abroad.

"I made your grace's excuse to the House, according to your commands, as soon as I had your letter. I will beg leave to add a few words of what is of great importance, if any use may be made of it.

"The behaviour of one party† of men, this session, has convinced the king, (as he says very often, and very plainly,) that he himself is aimed at; and not ministers, or party, otherwise than in order to prejudice him. You may easily believe, when he thinks of this matter seriously, he cannot but begin with thinking of yourself; and I have been often asked, if nothing would be enough to engage you. I could not rest, without mentioning this whole matter to you. I am persuaded he is convinced all is lost, unless some spirit be recovered to his government, and that he is, in good earnest, determined to do almost any thing in order to it. If any thing will do, and what that is, you are the best judge, I know, and I hope you will be so good as to let me have your thoughts, of which I will never make any other use than as you direct. I should observe to you, that this mind was never clearly discovered till the business of the secretary was declared.

* The celebrated Dr. Stillingfleet, who died in March, 1699, and was succeeded by Dr. Lloyd, bishop of Litchfield.

† The tories.

"I need not mention Mr. Yard to you. He was told, that my lord Albemarle had recommended Mr. Tucker to my lord Jersey; but I have found a way to stop that. I believe one word in his favour, from your grace, would fix him in the office; but how fit that is for you to do, I submit to your own consideration," &c.

"P. S. My lord Orford's mortifications, this session, in both Houses, are got pretty well over. I hope he will be of opinion to part with his Treasury place, and to keep in the Admiralty; otherwise, I think he will quite lessen his character, if he should aim at parting with neither, or both."

REPLY OF THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Is glad the king has manifested a more favourable disposition—Declines accepting any employment—Conjectures on vacancies and promotions.]

"*Grafton, April* 3-13, 1699.—My lord; I am extremely obliged by your lordship's favour to the dean of Worcester, but I doubt the archbishop is not only resolved upon another scheme, but, some way or other, set against him; which, I am confident, he neither deserves from his grace, nor from the public; and, without his favour, it is to no purpose to pretend to this preferment, nor any other; and he must have patience.

"I am infinitely overjoyed, that his majesty is in those dispositions your lordship mentions. If this session has thoroughly convinced him, it is the happiest he ever had since he came to the crown; and I did not take it to be so, till I heard it had that effect. I conclude the king goes into Holland this spring, and thought it would be decent for me to pay my duty to him, when he went to Newmarket, or Windsor, or to any place where I can be, and breathe. I acquainted Mr. Secretary with my intention, who sent me word, the king would be glad to see me; and I understand, it will be most acceptable at Newmarket: so thither I design to go in the Easter-week, if that be the time of his majesty's being there. It is not very probable I shall have any discourse with him, unless in public; however, in case I should, I should

be glad to receive some instructions, what I am to say. I have been so long out of the world, and know so little what is wished, that I may likely mistake; and, as I have little prospect of ever being able to do good, I would be the more cautious to do no mischief.

"As to what your lordship inquires concerning me, when you reflect, you will easily answer yourself, that a man who cannot live four days together in a great town, can be capable of nothing. I know not what shift some men, who are in love with business, or power, might make; but I, who could scarcely endure the uneasiness of it, in my best health, can have no thoughts of engaging again, at least, till I am free from that disadvantage, which I much question whether I shall ever quite master.

"I know not what my lord Orford's thoughts are, having had no letter from him this winter; but, if I can guess, by his former discourse, he would incline to quit the Admiralty, and keep the treasurer's* place. But, probably, he will be advised by his friends, who, I suppose, will not be for his continuing in both. I doubt that vote will have an unlucky effect upon what your lordship and I concurred in, as to Mr. Montague. My common letters say, he quits the Treasury to be auditor, Mr. Smith to be a teller, lord Orford the Admiralty, to keep treasurer of the navy. Mr. Priestman has resigned, and sir Robert Rich, it is said, designs it. This makes such vacancies, that it is above my comprehension, how they will be well supplied. I hear my lord Lonsdale comes to town, who, I suppose, is designed for something. If these removes should make room to get Mr. Walsh into any thing, I believe he would be capable and faithful. I hope he has behaved well this session. He writes me word, Mr. Montague has been kind to him, which I take to be a good sign, because he sees what he does.

When I congratulated my lord Jersey upon his being declared

* Of the navy.

secretary, I recommended, in general, to him, the clerks he would find in the office, but in particular Mr. Yard.

"It was good luck that these tedious trials happened at the end of your fatigue. I have this winter often inquired after your health, and, when I have heard you have held out well, I have truly rejoiced, as I should at all good fortune that befals your lordship," &c.

CHAPTER 9.

1699.

Confidential communications between the duke of Shrewsbury and lord Sunderland—New and ineffectual attempt of Shrewsbury to mediate a reconciliation between that nobleman and the whigs—Accepts reluctantly the post of lord chamberlain—Decreasing influence of the whigs—Montague retires from the Treasury-board, and accepts the auditorship of the exchequer—Arrangement in consequence of this change.—Correspondence from May to December, 1699.

WHILE the king was absent, the correspondence of Shrewsbury with the whig chiefs appears to have been suspended, or, at least, no traces of any epistolary intercourse remain in the family papers. During the same period, the letters of Vernon are barren of incident, and afford no clue to trace the conduct and feelings of his noble patron. From the subsequent letters of lord Sunderland we are, however, enabled to ascertain, that the duke visited that nobleman at Althorp; and that they entered into a confidential communication of their sentiments on public affairs, which was transmitted to the king. This visit seems to have inspired Shrewsbury with the hope, that a reconciliation might yet be effected. With this view, he repaired to London in July; but he was far from receiving that encouragement, which he expected from the whigs, whose animosity against Sunderland appears to have increased, and to have been principally stimulated by lord Orford. In fact, their jealousy was carried to such a height, that the king, after his return from the continent, requested Sunderland to abstain from visiting the capital, though he was anxious to conclude the preliminaries of a marriage, between his son, lord Spencer, and lady Ann Churchill, second daughter of the earl of Marlborough.

Disappointed and chagrined at the failure of this attempt,

Shrewsbury returned to his country seat, but still maintained a confidential correspondence with Sunderland. With the hope, however, of effecting some kind of compromise, which might restore harmony to the administration, he, at this time, yielded to the importunities of the king, and, though with undisguised reluctance, consented to accept the staff of lord chamberlain.

The unsettled state of the government, and the difficulties which were expected to arise, in the approaching session, had induced the king to return from the continent, at an earlier period than usual, and soon after his arrival at Kensington, about the middle of October, he was gratified with the attendance of the duke of Shrewsbury, whose appointment as lord chamberlain, was announced on the 25th. The duke, however, had scarcely accepted the office, when, either from indisposition or disgust, he retired into the country, and, as we find, from the letters of Mr. Vernon, manifested his determination to resign.

A sufficient motive for his vacillation may be found in the temper of the king, the situation of the ministry, and the irritation of the public mind. The last arrangement of the administration was, as we have already observed, merely a temporary expedient to prevent an immediate dissolution of the government, but was far from giving the ministry, either the confidence of the king, or the means of conducting public business, while the tories, flushed with their victories, and encouraged by their increased strength, had successfully wrought upon the popular feeling, and ardently anticipated the downfall of their opponents.

To add to the perplexity of the moment, Montague scarcely waited for the king's return, before he withdrew from the management of the treasury, by taking the place of auditor of the exchequer, and thus reserved to himself the power of acting a cautious and doubtful part in the stormy discussions, which were expected in the House of Commons. The earl of Tankerville, who succeeded to the head of the board, was a member of the Upper House, and possessed little influence; and the principal weight of business therefore rested upon Mr. Smith, chancellor of the exchequer, who, though an able speaker, was unequal to contend with Harley and his

associates, or to stem the torrent of faction, which was, at this time, turned against the throne.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Rejoices in the prospect of receiving him at Althorp—Anxious to converse on the state of affairs.]

"*Althorp, May 29-June* 8.*—My lord; there is no time nor place, in which I should not be extreme glad to wait upon you, and, therefore, I must be infinitely pleased to do it here, which I will not only hope for, but depend upon, after the expectations you have been so kind to give; for it would be now cruel to disappoint me. Though I am quite out of the world, it is impossible not to be concerned for the whole, and not to be sorry, when breaches are made in the government, that may endanger the general quiet, which is precious to those, who are retired only to enjoy it; so that however incapable I am of contributing to what I wish, I should be very glad to know your thoughts on some things, which I am persuaded I shall, when I see you, having been so long, and resolving to be, for ever, &c.

"P. S. I cannot but think, that ill health, or being left by one's friends, are either of them better reasons for retiring, than any my lord Orford has."

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Has referred the king to the duke, for his sentiments—Wishes to decline the honour of waiting on the king, on his return from Holland—Disavows any resentment against the whigs.]

"*Althorp, July* 1-11, 1699.—My lord; I did not pretend, when you were here, to tell you how sensible I was of your favours, neither will I go about it now, but in three words, that I am entirely yours. I have acquainted the king with your being here, and that, however insignificant my thoughts were, I had opened them to you, without reserve, of things and persons, and of his

* Without the date of the year, but evidently written in 1699.

affairs in general. I let him know, likewise, that I had told you, though to nobody else, of his intentions concerning my attending him, at his return, which I begged he would not resolve, till he had seen you, who would be best able to lay before him, all that relates to that matter, which is so little important, I am almost ashamed to mention it to him, or to you. But, if people lay weight upon what does not deserve it, it is their fault.

"I will trouble you no longer, but to tell you, that as to public affairs, I am of the same opinion I have been of, since we first talked of them; that I can never be of any other; that I have no resentment,* so much as against my lord Orford, for whom I wished all the last winter, though he was pleased to say to my lord G———, what I told you, that I would serve my lord Wh———,† if it were in my power; and, for all others, I never had any reason to be angry, and to yourself, I will be for ever," &c.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Does not intend to wait on the king—Leaves his grace to communicate his sentiments to the whig chiefs—Will be perfectly governed by his opinion—Conveys assurances of support, from his friend, Mr. Guy.]

"*Althorp, July* 15-25, 1699.—My lord; I know not that I shall see the king at his return, though you do; but I am sure, if you do not, I will not stir from hence. You are master of all that I said to you, to communicate what you think fit, to my lord Wharton and Mr. Montague. Every thing of that kind may easily be turned wrong, and exposed, if it is only by talking of it. But, I believe, if they should be so inclined, the consideration they have for you will restrain them. I am apt to think my lord Orford will not meet you. If he should, you know how I told you, that he had distinguished himself from the rest of the world in relation to me, and, therefore, I do not desire to have any thing to do with him, but, however, even that you shall govern as you please.

* So in the original, probably the word *even* omitted.
† Lord Wharton.

"If any thing occurs to me, that I shall think important, I will not fail of acquainting you with it; but I do not believe there will, for we talked of most things. You know my thoughts of them, and they will not change. I am entirely your's, and will never be less so," &c.

"P. S. Mr. Guy* came hither last Tuesday, and went away on Friday, which, I think, is a great action this hot weather, for an old man, coming and going through in a day. But it is not for this that I name him to you, but to tell you, that he is truly your servant, and wishes extremely that you would come again into business; which, if you do, he will serve you, not only in every thing in his power, that can any way relate to your personal interest, but just as you shall direct, in what concerns the public, with all his friends. I asked him, if he would make this good, and if I might answer for it. He said yes, and that he would never fail the duke of Shrewsbury. All which he said so in earnest, that I think I ought to let you know it, and so I told him I would."

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Has not changed his sentiments, with regard to the whigs—Lord Orford will meet his grace at Boughton—Commends the duke's moderation, and is anxious for due confidence between the king and his servants.]

"*Althorp, Aug.* 7-17, 1699.—My lord; I write now, only to let

* Mr. Henry Guy, who had been employed under Charles the second, and James, and held the post of secretary of the Treasury. He was intrusted with the confidential office of distributing the secret service money, and was twice subjected to the charge of bribery: first, for taking 200 guineas for the payment of the arrears, due to a regiment, and secondly, in the transaction, relative to the renewal of the East India Company's charter. For the first of these offences, he was sent to the Tower, and expelled from the House of Commons; but official corruption was so common, and so little regarded in those times, that he appears to have lost none of his personal interest, by the stigma. On the contrary, he evidently possessed great weight in the House of Commons, and was among the few admitted to the convivial society of the sovereign. He is always spoken of as a devoted partisan of lord Sunderland. He held an official, though subordinate, situation in the reigns of William and Anne. He died extremely affluent, and left the bulk of his fortune to William Pulteney, afterwards earl of Bath. Burnett; Rapin's continuation, and the other historians of the times.

you know, that I have received yours of the 29th of July, for as I desired you to say just what you think proper to lord Wharton, Mr. Montague, and lord Orford, so I do still. I believe the last will meet you, for I heard from my lord of Bedford, since he came to Woburn, where they expect my lady Orford, when my lord goes to Boughton. It is said, that he rails excessively, and personally at the king, which I hope is not true, for I will always wish him well, for old acquaintance sake, and the sake of the family, and sure nothing can be more indecent, if it is, as it is related. But, perhaps, he does not yet think himself safe, without such helps. I believe nothing is more certain, than that the moderation you mention, and intend, is the only means to do good, provided the true measures are carried on steadily, which is not practicable, unless there is first established, a confidence between the king and those he chiefly employs, that no jealousies may be of either side; for, without that, every thing will be spoiled, though never so well designed. I have thought a great deal of this, since I saw you, and am so satisfied with it, though perhaps without reason, that I wish extremely I could see you, for an hour only, if it were possible, but I know not how it can be.

"When you write, I believe the best way of sending your letters is to Mr. Vernon; being least likely to miscarry. I desire to hear when you receive this, and am unalterably," &c.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Hopes the king will prevail with him to return to office—Will take no part in business without him.]

"*Althorp, Sept.* 9-19th, 1699.—My lord; I am very sorry your entertainment has given you any pain, for I hope you will not be so unjust as to accuse the air of London. I wish you had met with more encouragement, than I find you have done, but I hope the king will overcome all the objections you can make, and that you will be persuaded to yield to his desire, and that of all honest men.

"I have received an answer from him, to the letter I told you I would write. He expresses a most extraordinary concern,

that you would return to business, and does expect it. He will have no thoughts of me, but as you shall advise; therefore, I most earnestly desire, that, if you intend being in the country, you will persuade him from commanding my attendance, for I shall obey with great unwillingness, and can be of no use, I am sure, without you, whatever I may be with you. I do not write this, out of modesty, or to be contradicted, but as my true thoughts, which I never have disguised to you, nor ever will, being, with the utmost sincerity," &c.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Announces an intended marriage between his son and lady Ann Churchill—The king had expressed a wish that he would return to London, but he does not intend to comply without a positive command.]

"*Althorp, Sept.* 26-*Oct.* 6, 1699.—My lord; I have received your letter of the 20th with great satisfaction, being very glad to be so mistaken, as you tell me I was. Since you went from London, my lord and lady Marlborough have been here, and we have agreed a marriage between my son and lady Ann Churchill,* as soon as it can be, before the writings are drawn, and without the king's leave. It is yet a secret, though it has been talked of, but it ought not to be so to you. This will certainly be turned to the politics, as every thing is. If it can have any relation to them, it shall only be to pursue those measures, for the present and the future, which we discoursed of when you were here; for I will never change in any particular of what I then said to you, and have since writ. My lord Marlborough told me, that the king had said to him, before he went away, that he thought it would be proper for me to come to London at his return, and he believed he would speak to him again of it, as soon as he saw him, and, therefore, desired to know what he should say. I prayed him to assure his majesty, that I would always obey his commands; but that, if any objections were to be made, I knew he would hear them. I said nothing to him of the king's having writ

* See "Memoirs of the Duke of Marlborough," ch. 7.

to me, or of any thing that had passed between you and me, upon that matter.

"I am so far from intending to be at London at the king's arrival, that I do not think of it at all, unless he commands it, which I am persuaded he will not do, when he has considered it, and knows how it is apprehended by some, who ought to like it, if it were of much importance. But I said enough of this, when you were here, and, therefore, will now only beg of you to do with me as I desired in my last letter.

"I depend entirely on your judgment and friendship, and will for ever be," &c.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Rejoices at his acceptance of the post of lord chamberlain.]

"*Althorp, Oct.* 28-*Nov.* 7, 1699.—My lord; I rejoice extremely at the news Mr. Secretary sent me, and which you confirmed by your letter of the 26th. It is good for the public. It will be of great satisfaction to the king, and, I dare say, the air of Kensington will agree with you, as well as that of Worcestershire, if you will live regularly, as you have done there. I wish you all happiness, and am, most sincerely," &c.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Thanks him for his visit to Althorp—Refers to their confidential communications—Will obey the commands of the king to remain at Althorp—Anxious to repair to London, to conclude the nuptials of his son.]

"*Althorp, Nov.* 4-14, 1699.—My lord; You give me such encouragement to be free, that I should be it, though it were not my inclination, which I think I shewed it was, when you were here; for we talked of many persons and things, and I exposed my thoughts as plainly as I could, which are not changed in the least, and so I will continue to do, as long as you are so kind as to like it. Whatever the king's mind is, in relation to me, I will ever submit to. I hope he does not doubt it; and shall most willingly stay here, not only till after Christmas, but for seven years, if he thinks fit; though I have a great concern at this time,

being most extremely desirous to see my son married, which cannot be so much as advanced, without my being in town. Before Christmas is a certain time, which after Christmas is not, but may be lengthened for ever, as men's humours or jealousies move, if the king give way to them. Before a sessions, though a man is never so insignificant, he may be said to influence the measures the king thinks fit to take; and the same may be said after a sessions, because, commonly, changes are then made; but all other seasons are pretty indifferent; so that, if I might be in town just before the holidays, it would suit very well with this affair I have so much at heart.

"Endeavouring to marry a son to one's mind is so good a reason for being in town, and shall be so public, that I suppose it may satisfy the most extravagant jealousy. But every thing that relates to me, ought, and shall yield to what the king likes best.

"By what I have writ, you will see my thoughts, which I beg of you to manage as you shall think fit; for I depend upon your judgment and your favour entirely, and shall like whatever you do, for I am, most entirely," &c.

"P. S. The king having said to my lord Marlborough, and to Mr. Guy, the same as you have writ to me, I have let them know my thoughts of it, just as I have to you, which I acquaint you with, because perhaps they may speak to you of it."

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Concerned at his relapse—Has no intention to return to business, since the duke proposes to retire—Hopes he will not go abroad.]

"*Althorp, Nov.* 11-21, 1699.—My lord; I am most extremely troubled to hear of your being ill, for you, for the king, and for the public. If I may be allowed to name my own concern, I lose by it all the ease I could ever hope for, any where but here, where, if it please God, I will for ever take up my rest, as soon as my son is married. If I could have this house full of gold, I would not be in business, with any uneasiness to the ministers;

and, if they liked it, now you are going, I would as soon be in the galleys. And I am sure I will never be engaged against any one of them, directly or indirectly; but I would be glad, for the little time I shall be in town, to live easily with them all, and with every body of that kind, and especially with my lord chancellor, upon several accounts, and my lord Wharton, though he has been unjust to me, for two reasons, that I think he is truly a friend to you, and to the public. Therefore, I will desire of you, since you have given me such leave, that you will let them two know how you found me, when you were here, adding what you think fit, in order to what I wish.

"I cannot imagine why you should go out of England, being so well here, when you are quiet in the country. The inquisition of Portugal, and the bigotry of France, cannot agree with your circumstances; but, whatever you do, I wish you all happiness: as to my own soul, I owe it to you, for your justice and kindness to me, and will be, to the last moment of my life, with the utmost sincerity," &c.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Again dissuades him from going abroad.]

"*Althorp, Nov.* 15-25; 1699.—My lord; I give you many thanks, for the care you have taken to let me know the king's pleasure so soon. I hope it will be of no prejudice to him, nor uneasy to those about him. I cannot but wish still that you would choose Eyford or Grafton, rather than France, to recover in. I think it is plain that regularity and quiet are sufficient for your cure. I have desired Mr. Secretary to speak to you about a small affair, when you are most at leisure, being unwilling to trouble you more than is fitting," &c.

At this period we find it necessary again to advert to one of those causes of disquietude, which so essentially contributed to alienate the duke of Shrewsbury from public life.

The informer, Smith, as we have already observed, long continued to assail the king and ministers with his importunities and

intelligence. At length, to divert this annoyance, he was sent abroad, under the plea of employing him as a spy on the Jacobites. After a short stay, he returned to England, but, not being sufficiently gratified in his pecuniary demands, again resumed his attacks on the duke of Shrewsbury, and was again instigated by lord Peterborough, with the hope of exciting new odium against the duke; at the time when the affair of captain Kidd became the subject of a public scrutiny. With this view Smith published his correspondence with the duke, under the title of "Memoirs of Secret Services," and added a scurrilous commentary on the letter from his grace to the chancellor, and on the proceedings during the former investigation. This production he at the same time delivered in manuscript, to the chancellor, to be communicated to the House of Peers.

The event, however, did not answer his expectations; for, instead of listening to his calumnies, the House immediately ordered him to be taken into custody. When he appeared at the bar, even lord Peterborough seemed as if ashamed of so unworthy an agent; and the decision mentioned in the following letter, from the chancellor, was adopted, almost without a discussion. Being committed to the Gate-house, for a breach of privilege, Smith remained in prison a considerable period, because he would not so far acknowledge the justice of his punishment, as to petition for his release. He was, for some time, liberally supplied by lord Peterborough, and others; but, being found useless, as an instrument of mischief, he was finally neglected.

After his release, he again importuned the government, and sent a new production, in manuscript, to the king, through the hands of lord Jersey, secretary of state, with the hope of obtaining a considerable gratuity for its suppression. But he had no longer to work on a timid mind, like that of Shrewsbury; for his application was treated with contempt, and he is finally lost in that oblivion, which best befitted his character.*

* Mr. Vernon's letters, passim.—Journals of the Lords.

LORD CHANCELLOR SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Congratulates his grace on the decision of the House of Peers, relative to Smith*—Proceedings on the subject.]

"*Dec.* 16-26, 1699.—My lord; I take the liberty to congratulate your grace upon the putting an end to the trouble you will have in either house, this session. I shall say nothing of what passed in the House of Commons, where I had the honour to be named with your grace. It is a good while since, and you have had full accounts of that day's work; but, I think myself obliged to give you a short account of what has been done in the House of Lords, in relation to Smith.

"On Monday last he appeared at the bar, after having been taken into custody. He avowed his book, and said he could justify it, with other things, like a mere madman. That night the House went no farther than to vote him guilty of a breach of privilege. Yesterday the House came to a resolution, that the written book, sent to the House by Smith, as also the printed book, being a copy of it, was a false and scandalous libel, reflecting on your grace's honour, and the honour of the House, and have ordered it to be burnt by the hangman, on Monday morning next.

"I will not pretend to give your grace an account of particular men's carriage, in writing, though it may very well deserve to be known. That which I am most pleased with is, that a certain lord,† after much ado, was brought to tell his long-threatened story, and, I think, it is not possible a thing should come off more poorly.

"You know inquisitiveness will prevail, and, accordingly, between the censure, and the vote for burning, Smith was called in, and examined as to the person who gave him 100*l.*, and employed him beyond sea; and he charged it upon Jack Arnold. He was also asked, who the great man was, who hindered the lady Perkins from presenting the petition. He said, he supposed it was your grace; but, before we had done examining him, the whole House

* See the account of Smith, Part I. p. 405.

† Lord Peterborough.

was sensible of the falsehood and folly of his pretence, so that I believe your grace will never more have occasion to be troubled with the mention of Smith.

"I hope this very mild weather will contribute to your recovery, which none can wish more heartily than I do. I know you have more particular accounts of what passes here, than I can give you, and, therefore, shall only add, that I am, with all possible truth and respect," &c.

CHAPTER 10.

1699—1700.

Proceedings in parliament on the affair of captain Kidd, and on the resumption of the Irish grants—New attempts to mediate a reconciliation between Sunderland and the whigs—Mediation of the duke of Shrewsbury solicited—Disappointment of the king and lord Sunderland—Dismission of lord Somers—Resentment of the whigs—Vacillation of the king—Various and contradictory overtures to the whigs—Proposal to lord Somers to return to office, rejected—Ineffectual attempts of the king to conciliate the whigs—Meeting of Shrewsbury with the chiefs of the party—Alarming state of the country—Shrewsbury extorts the royal permission to resign—Offends the whigs by his intimacy with Sunderland—Refuses various offices of state—Retires to the continent.

DEEPLY as the king had been mortified, in the preceding session, by the peremptory dismission of his dutch guards, he had still deeper humiliations to endure, in the second session, which commenced on the 16th of November, 1699, and presented a scene of violence and faction, scarcely to be paralleled, except in the conduct of the long parliament.

He opened the proceedings, with a speech, recommending due provision for the safety of the kingdom, exhorting the Commons to make good the deficiency in the funds, and furnish the requisite supplies; and soliciting the restoration of harmony and confidence. But the Commons, to use the words of a tory historian,* "were now become wanton in their disgust." The leaders of the successful party, flushed by recent victories, and emboldened by the weakness and dismay of their opponents, seized every pretence to degrade the crown, in the public eye, and evinced a determination to demolish the whole fabric of government, erected at the Revolution. Even the mild recommendation to mutual confidence,

* Smollett.

which formed so gratifying a feature in the royal speech, was instantly made the theme of acrimonious invective, and furnished a plea for a sullen remonstrance. A reply was voted, complaining that jealousy and distrust had been excited against the duty and affection of the Commons, and desiring that his majesty would visit, with his displeasure, those who had presumed to misrepresent their proceedings.

In their subsequent deliberations, they fully manifested the spirit which had prompted this unbecoming and captious remonstrance; for they exerted their whole power to vilify the sovereign, both directly and indirectly, and omitted no pretext to harass and persecute their whig opponents, whether in office, or retirement. No one was, at this period, a more marked object of hostility, than that honest and upright statesman, the lord chancellor Somers, whom they singled out, as the leader of administration. Unfortunately the affair of captain Kidd, which had created unusual clamour, presented an opportunity to assail him, as one of the chief patrons of so unpopular a scheme, and, at the same time, to impugn the king, for giving the sanction of the royal authority to the acts of a notorious pirate.

So eager were the opposition to bring this subject under the cognizance of parliament, that they scarcely suffered the royal speech to be taken into consideration, before they adverted to the charge. In a Committee, on the subject of trade, Mr. Moore unexpectedly turned the discussion to the depredations of pirates, and, alluding to Kidd, bitterly complained, that he had plundered, with a commission under the great seal, and was encouraged by those who shared his spoils, and who had procured a grant of all he should steal. These expressions were a signal to the party, and Mr. Howe and sir Christopher Musgrave vied, in giving strength to the charge, by new exaggerations. They urged, that those in authority were not content to sweep away, by grants, all, which could be obtained in England, but sent out their thieves to rifle abroad. The friends of the accused ministers offered no defence, and an order passed, for communicating to the House the warrant of Kidd, the grant of his captures, the indenture with the Treasury, relative

to the share reserved by the king, and other papers connected with the transaction.

On the 6th of December the discussion was resumed in the same spirit. A strenuous effort was made by the party to elicit a vote of censure against the warrant, as illegal, dishonourable to the king, and contrary to the laws of nations, without reference to the merits of the question, as developed in the other papers, or to the names of the parties concerned. But even the malice of faction could not reconcile itself to the palpable injustice of so partial a decision. Mr. Vernon was permitted to give a full account of the whole transaction, and named the persons concerned; and his candid explanation made a deep impression on the House. The whigs then resumed their spirit, and, in an animated debate, in which Mr. Montague distinguished himself, ably vindicated the principle and legality of the grant. The discussion was protracted from noon till nine in the evening, when many of the accusers shrunk from the attack, and the motion was negatived by a majority of 56, or 189 against 133. This triumph baffled the grand object of the party, who had prepared to follow the intended vote of censure, with an address to the king for the removal of the chancellor.

Notwithstanding the vehemence and acrimony with which this charge was urged, the letters of Mr. Vernon shew an evident bias among some of the tory leaders, in favour of the duke of Shrewsbury; but his grace manfully resolved to share the fate of his former colleagues, and appears to have been relieved from great anxiety, by their triumphant acquittal.

Kidd was, subsequently, brought to England, underwent a trial, and suffered the punishment due to his crime.

In this transaction the king was chiefly attacked in the persons of his ministers; but, in another proceeding, which occupied the attention of parliament, for the greater part of the session, he was insulted as a man, and humbled as a sovereign. This was the resumption of the Irish and other grants, with which he had rewarded the services of his friends and adherents.

Soon after the reduction of Ireland a bill had passed the Commons, attainting those who had taken up arms against the government, and confiscating their estates, two thirds of which were to be appropriated for the payment of the public debts, and one third left at the disposal of the crown. Some demurs, however, occurred in the house of lords, which appearing likely to protract the measure, the king prorogued the parliament, leaving the matter in suspense, but promising to take no farther step, till the two houses could come to a decision. The ensuing session passing without any revival of the question, or even any mention of the bill, he deemed himself at liberty to exercise his undoubted prerogative; and began to grant these lands to his favourites, dependants, and servants. Several sessions passing over in the same silence, he continued to exercise the same power, till the whole of the confiscated property was alienated. Among the persons who were thus rewarded, his dutch adherents were conspicuous; and a considerable portion of the lands belonging to king James was conferred on Mrs. Elizabeth Villiers, now countess of Orkney.

These Irish grants, however, furnished too plausible a theme for party clamour to be overlooked, and, on various occasions, they were severely censured in parliament, and through the medium of the press. As early as 1697, an attempt had been made for their revocation; but it appears to have been parried by a counter proposal to carry the inquiry back to the grants made in the reigns of the two last sovereigns of the House of Stuart, in which many of the considerable tories were themselves deeply interested. At length, when the victorious party began to feel their ascendancy, and the financial embarrassments gave scope to their efforts, the attack assumed a more regular shape. In the preceding session a commission had been appointed for an inquiry into the grants of forfeited estates, under the present reign; and the task was assigned to seven members, chosen by ballot. Of these, the earl of Drogheda, sir Richard Leving, and sir Francis Brewster, were considered as moderate whigs; and the

remaining four,* namely, Mr. Annesley, Mr. Trenchard, Mr. Hamilton, and Mr. Langford, were zealous tories, and, consequently hostile to government.

These commissioners proceeded to Ireland, and the inquiry was prosecuted, according to the opinion even of Smollett,* "with more zeal than justice, and more resentment against the court than abhorrence of corruption." A difference of opinion, as might have been expected, arose between the two parties in the commission; and the four tory members delivered a report, fraught with extreme exaggeration, raising the value of those forfeitures to a million and a half, and dwelling with peculiar, and even personal warmth, on the grants made to the foreign favourites, and to the countess of Orkney. The other three commissioners not only refused to sanction this report, but sent over a counter memorial, stating their reasons for dissenting from their colleagues.

On the 15th of the preceding December a bill was ordered for the resumption of these forfeitures, in aid of the public service; and, when it was presented to the House, on the 13th of January, 1700, a debate arose, on the question of printing the report of the commissioners; but this was so warmly and ably opposed by Mr. Montague, and his coadjutors, that the movers of the bill did not venture to press it to a division.

In the heat of the discussion, Mr. Montague asserted, that a member of the House had written to the commissioners, urging them to carry their inquiry into the private estate of the king, as the means of rendering him still more odious. This imputation creating a great ferment, it was made the subject of a debate on the 15th. Mr. Montague was imperatively required to indicate his informer; and, after a fruitless endeavour to evade the question, was reduced to acknowledge that he received the information from Mr. Methuen, then lord chancellor of Ireland, who, in his turn, declared, that he had been misunderstood by Mr. Montague; and that he had merely stated such a purpose to have been the subject of conversation among the commissioners themselves.

* Smollett, vol. 1, page 342.

Accordingly, those commissioners who were in England were ordered to attend, and, on the 16th, after hearing their explanation, the conduct of the four, who had signed the report, was formally approved, the imputation in question voted scandalous and unfounded, and sir R. Leving, from whom it originated, committed to the Tower, for aspersing his colleagues.

On the 18th, the bill was read a second time, and the tories availed themselves of the impression produced by the preceding debate. Unfortunately, the king himself furnished an additional pretext for their violence, by commanding Mr. Vernon to claim the third of this property, reserved to him by the original bill. This impolitic proposal, which was made in opposition to the advice of all his ministers, produced such an effect as might have been expected, in the temper of parties; for the motion was over-ruled without a division, and Mr. Montague did not venture to take a share in the debate. Encouraged by this triumph, the opponents of the court proposed and carried a vote of censure, declaring that these grants had been the cause of heavy burthens to the people, that they were dishonourable to the king, and that those who were concerned in passing them, had highly failed in the performance of their trust and duty. Though this censure so strongly reflected on the ministers, Montague and Smith were so far daunted by the spirit and strength of their opponents, that the first merely urged that he was no more accountable than lord Godolphin, lord Lonsdale, or any other member of the Treasury-board; and the second plainly avowed his opposition to these obnoxious grants.

When the bill was committed, the ministerial party and the whigs were so hopeless of success, or so fearful of public odium, that they withdrew from the deliberation, and left the movers to model it according to their pleasure. A committee of ways and means being likewise appointed, the tories developed their design of appropriating these grants in aid of the supplies, and the motion being proposed by Harley, on the 15th of February, was carried without a division. As the discussion proceeded, the tories became more elated, and the friends of government more

depressed: "We are a dispersed and routed party," observes Mr. Vernon, "our opponents bear hard upon us, and we use no means to help ourselves."

The strongest indication which can be given of the temper of parties, is the proceeding on the presentation of the votes of censure passed on the 18th of January. These insulting declarations being embodied in an address, and carried, in triumph, by the tory leaders, the king could not refrain from expressing a dignified disapproval of their proceedings. He replied "He was not only led by inclination, but thought himself obliged, in justice, to reward those who had served well; and particularly in the reduction of Ireland, out of the estates forfeited to him there." He added, "as the long war had left the nation burthened with debt, proper measures for its liquidation, and for the support of public credit, would best contribute to the honour and welfare of the kingdom."

This reproof was too just and too well merited not to excite the most lively resentment, though the character and spirit of the king inspired a momentary feeling of awe and respect. When his reply was reported by the Speaker, a pause ensued. Mr. Howe, who had proposed the votes, first rose, but under the impulse of doubt and trepidation, and evidently apprehensive that he should not be supported by his colleagues. Sir Christopher Musgrave then addressed the House; and complained, though with less than his usual warmth, that the answer of the king conveyed a censure on their proceedings. Harley next spoke, in a tone of banter and equivocation; and Mr. Howe, finally perceiving that the friends of government remained silent and embarrassed, at length ventured to resume his usual energy, and concluded with proposing a vote, that the person who had advised the answer was an enemy to the king and kingdom. Some apprehensions, however, still prevailed, that such a censure would be strenuously resisted; and it was modified by sir Christopher Musgrave into a resolution, "That the adviser had used his utmost endeavours to create a misunderstanding between the king and his people."

The next step of the party was to mark the sense of the House

on the conduct of the Irish commissioners. It was at first proposed to vote a recompence to the four who had signed the report, but this being overruled, lord Drogheda, who stood first on the list, and the four authors of the report, were rewarded with 1000*l.* each for their good services; but sir Richard Leving and sir Francis Brewster received only 500*l.* each, which was granted merely as a compensation for their expences.

In the interim, the bill of resumption had undergone the usual forms, and, on the 2nd of April, being read the third time, was sent to the Lords, tacked to the money bill for the service of the year.

Though the agitation of the public mind was extreme, and the friends of government divided and dismayed, the king still hoped that this obnoxious bill would either be defeated, or modified in the House of Lords, by the united interest of the ministry, the whigs, and his own dependants. He was, however, grievously disappointed. On the first reading a strong disposition, indeed, appeared for its modification, and an attempt was even made to oppose the second reading; but the motion was negatived by a majority of 70 against 23. The whigs seem to have been divided on the occasion, lord Tankerville and lord Orford favouring the bill, the duke of Devonshire, lord Lonsdale, and lord Haversham opposing it; but lord Wharton took a middle course, disapproving the bill, while he expatiated on the mischiefs, which might attend its rejection. The chancellor, whose weight would have influenced the course of proceeding, absented himself from the House, during the whole period, from real or feigned indisposition, and his place, as Speaker, was feebly supplied by the earl of Bridgewater.

While the bill was examined in a committee, threats were held out in the Lower House, of an impeachment against the earls of Portland and Albemarle, with a view of intimidating the king, and deterring his friends from obstructing its progress.

Indeed, as the sense of the Upper House had been decidedly manifested against throwing out the bill, the only expedient, which remained to defeat it, was, by proposing amendments, which it was natural to expect the Commons would reject, as an infringe-

ment on their privilege of granting supplies. On this occasion, lord Wharton took the lead, and was warmly seconded by lord Lonsdale, privy-seal.

The proceedings of the Lords were, however, vigilantly watched by the leading party in the Commons, who, without waiting the result of the deliberation in the Upper House, resumed their attacks, and laboured to keep up the ferment they had raised. On the 8th of April, the principal leaders brought the subject into debate, and expatiated, with great acrimony, on the conduct of the Peers, whose obstinacy they declared would involve the nation in ruin. The army, they stated, was on the point of being disbanded, from this obstruction of the supplies; the navy would equally be left without support; the public credit would be ruined, and the faith of parliament forfeited. All these mischiefs, they added, were to be incurred, for the sake of preserving the grants made to those, who would beggar the kingdom to enrich themselves, and who, being foreigners, and without the bowels of englishmen, would desert a country, which they could no longer plunder. They then turned their invectives against the ministry, who were accused of seconding such nefarious practices. At length the lord chancellor was singled out, as eminently culpable, and they did not scruple to arraign even his legal character, and to stigmatize him, for want of religion.

These invectives were heard by the ministerial party in silent astonishment, and the tories carried, without opposition, a vote for printing the report of the Irish commissioners, their memorable resolutions of the 18th of January, the king's reply, and the subsequent censure of the House, on that occasion. To these were added, the resolution of the Commons, in 1690, laying claim to the forfeited estates, and the promise of the king, not to dispose of these forfeitures, without the consent of parliament. Emboldened by success, and the dismay of their adversaries, they also carried a vote, which had before been defeated, declaring, that any privy counsellor, who had passed or procured, or should pass or procure, any grant, to his own use, was guilty of a high crime and misde-

meanour. This censure was evidently aimed at the chancellor, and intended as a foundation for farther proceedings.

Scarcely had this torrent of invective and censure subsided, when the bill was returned from the Lords, with the proposed amendments. These clauses, though not contrary to the principle of the bill, and merely intended to preserve the royal prerogative, were severally rejected, without a dissenting voice. The usual reasons against the amendment of a money bill, were then embodied by a Committee, and transmitted by lord Hartington, to the Lords, leaving them responsible for the consequences of obstructing the supplies. The Upper House having purposely adjourned, the Commons postponed their farther deliberations, but, not without intimating, that if the bill of resumption was not passed, in its original state, they would render themselves justice, by recurring to impeachments.

The ensuing days presented one of the most interesting spectacles which, perhaps, had ever occurred within the walls of parliament. A conference having taken place between the two houses, sir Edward Seymour stated, that he and his colleagues had delivered the reasons of the Commons, and expressed his hopes of a favourable result. But, while the House anxiously awaited the decision of the Peers, a report was brought, that they had resolved to persist in their amendments, by a majority of 47 against 34. This unexpected intelligence produced a deep impression, and there was reason to fear, that the disappointment would be followed by still more violent resolutions than before. New hopes were, however, communicated, that a compromise might be effected, in another conference, and Harley prudently prevented farther discussion, by a timely proposal for adjournment, till the following day.

The House being again assembled, a conference took place, and the Lords delivered their reasons for persisting in the amendments. These being read, a new conference was readily agreed to; but the members who were deputed on the occasion, were enjoined to declare, that the Commons persisted in their sentiments, and would, on no account, permit any amendment. A repetition of the

former violence appeared likely to occur, and some of the most ardent members began to clamour for impeachments, naming, particularly, the earls of Portland and Albemarle. The doors of the lobby were ordered to be locked, and no member was permitted to depart, till the fate of the bill was decided.

At this moment secretary Vernon was called out of the House, and informed by lord Jersey, that he had prevailed on the king to request the archbishop of Canterbury, and his friends, to desist from their opposition. This information diffused a momentary calm; but the general expectation was speedily damped, by the report, that the Lords still adhered to their amendments. "This," observes Mr. Vernon, "struck us all with consternation, and, I believe, there was not a man in the House, who did not think the nation ruined."

In the midst of a general ferment, Harley rose. He said, the country was reduced to the most deplorable situation; the army disbanded, credit destroyed, and the civil list swallowed up, by an enormous issue of exchequer bills. He concluded, with proposing a declaratory vote, that the army should be no longer maintained, as contrary to the Bill of Rights, and recommended the House to adopt such other resolutions, as were suited to the emergency. He was followed by Mr. Howe, who observed, "It is time to lay aside all animosities. Whatever faults we have found, we ought now to remember that we are all englishmen, involved in one calamity. We must unanimously exert ourselves, to preserve our liberties and country, if there is yet a way left for their preservation." These declarations too evidently indicated the revival of those scenes, which marked the proceedings of the long parliament; and the speeches and conduct of the leading members, could be considered in no other light, than as an incitement to a new revolution.

Fortunately, however, the country was rescued from the precipice, to which it was driven, by a turn, as singular as it was unexpected, for Wharton, the author of the amendments, prudently departed from the scene, before the House of Lords came to a final resolution. On the division, the amendments were supported by 40 votes against 37, but, on counting the proxies, the numbers were found

equal. By the rules of the House, this constituted a negative; but a question arising, whether it applied to the amendments, or to the bill itself, some of the dissenting peers and bishops withdrew, and the bill passed by a majority of five.

With equal energy and promptitude, the leaders of opposition availed themselves of the crisis. When apprised, that the bill had passed, they expressed their satisfaction at their escape from the danger, with which the country was threatened, but urged, that to prevent its recurrence, they must secure themselves against an evil ministry, and the influence of foreigners. At the motion of sir Bartholomew Shore, the vote of censure against privy counsellors, who passed, or procured grants, for their own benefit, was read, as well as the list of the privy council. The conduct and character of the ministers were next subjected to a scrutiny. At the name of the lord chancellor Somers, a debate arose, and that great and able statesman was loaded with the most acrimonious abuse. His grant was declared exorbitant, and his ministry partial and oppressive; he was held up to public odium, as the author of the unfavourable replies, received from the throne: and, though he had absented himself, during the discussions on the bill of resumption, he was accused as the principal promoter of the opposition it had encountered. He was ably defended by several of his friends, among whom we distinguish Mr. Cowper * and lord Hartington. A vote of impeachment was, however, proposed by sir John Leviston, and changed, at the motion of sir Christopher Musgrave, into an address for his removal from the king's presence, and counsels, for ever. But the movers of the question had miscalculated on their power of leading the House into such a glaring act of injustice; for, on a division, the proposal was negatived by 167 voices against 106.

Not discouraged by this failure, the scrutiny was continued. At the name of the duke of Leeds, who enjoyed pensions and grants to the amount of 5,500*l.*, some hesitation appeared to prevail, and a motion was made for an adjournment. But, as the whigs themselves were not unwilling to mortify the foreign favourites, who

* Afterwards lord chancellor.

were known to be the next objects of attack, it was lost by a majority of eleven.

Lord Hartington then accused the foreigners, on the plea of their opposition to the bill of resumption, and concluded with proposing an address, for the exclusion of all persons, not natives, except prince George of Denmark, from the royal counsels, both in England and Ireland. This motion, which passed without opposition, was directed against the duke of Schomberg and the earls of Portland and Galway. A similar motion, with regard to the army, which was intended against lord Albemarle, was then suggested; but the leaders being satisfied with their victory, it was suffered to drop, and the House adjourned till the following day.

During the whole of these stormy discussions, the king had manifested the utmost uneasiness and indignation. He was no less offended with the apparent timidity and lukewarmness of the whigs, than with the violence and perseverance of the tories, and conceived himself deserted by those, who were interested to support him. With great reluctance he consented to withdraw his opposition to the bill of resumption; but, perceiving that this compliance did not save him from farther mortifications, he adopted the resolution of proroguing the parliament, to prevent the presentation of the unwelcome addresses, which had been voted by the Commons. Accordingly, on the 11th of April, he suddenly repaired to the House of Lords, gave his assent to sixty acts, including the bill of resumption, and dismissed the parliament, without the usual speech, from a dignified aversion to express his satisfaction for a grant of supplies, which he considered as invasive of his prerogative, and unjust towards his faithful servants and dependants.*

The alarming portents, which had marked the commencement of this session, inspired Sunderland with the hope, that the whigs

* This narrative is exclusively taken from the letters of Mr. Vernon, compared with the Journals of the Lords and Commons. It not only presents a distinct view of those memorable transactions; but is necessary to explain the ensuing correspondence, and to develop the motives which influenced the conduct of Shrewsbury, during the latter period of his stay in England.

were now taught to feel their own weakness, and might be disposed to a reconciliation. He seems to have infused a similar sentiment into the mind of the king, who had never ceased to regret his absence. The interdict, which had been laid on his approach to the capital, was, therefore, withdrawn, and he was permitted to avail himself of the marriage of his son, to appear at court. To facilitate the projected accommodation, a correspondence had taken place between the countesses of Orford and Sunderland, with the expectation that their interference might soften the asperity between their respective lords; and sir James Forbes, a friend of Sunderland, had been also employed in a similar manner. In conjunction with these proceedings, a confidential correspondence had been maintained between Sunderland and Shrewsbury; and, at the invitation of the king, the duke repaired to Hampton Court.

But, on entering the theatre of politics, he found, to his regret, that an accommodation was still hopeless and impracticable: and he dreaded to entangle himself in a negotiation, which, while it promised no success, might, perhaps, draw on him the resentment of the victorious party, in parliament, or the jealousy, even of those, whom he intended to serve. Accordingly, he did not wait the arrival of the king at Hampton Court, but, on the 8th of January, the very day preceding the royal visit, he departed abruptly, under the plea of indisposition, and returned to his country seat.

The king, who had calculated on the beneficial effects of his intervention, was severely disappointed. He lamented his departure to Mr. Vernon,* because he had a scheme to propose, by which he might enjoy the advice and assistance of the duke, without loading him with business, or placing him in the ministry; and hinted his suspicion, that he had fled from his presence, in order to avoid an explanation. He seems, however, to have readily appreciated the delicacy of his situation, and graciously accepted an excuse, for his abrupt departure, expressing regret at his indisposition, as the cause, though he considered it as the prelude to his resignation.

* Mr. Vernon to the duke of Shrewsbury, Jan. 9, 1699—1700.

Meanwhile, Sunderland appeared at the levee, at Hampton Court; and being ordered by lord Albemarle to attend his majesty privately, the ensuing Sunday, was received with marks of particular kindness. Two letters, which he addressed to Shrewsbury, at this period, are still extant, and, though brief, display his disappointment at the loss of his grace's expected interposition.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*London, Jan.* 13-23, 1699-1700.—My lord; If I had not concluded we should have seen you at Kensington, I would certainly have waited on you, at Hampton Court, though it might have furnished matter for schemes and jealousies, as other harmless things have done. I hope you will be well and quiet where you are, which, I confess, is hard to be here. I beg of you to let me know how you are, and what you design, in relation to being, or not being here; for, though I cannot say, that if you were at Kensington I would be at London, I can positively say, if you are not there I will be at Althorp, and, in all places, most truly," &c.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*London, Jan. 25-Feb.* 4, 1699-1700.—My lord; I am extreme glad to hear that you are better, though you ventured a good deal for it. Every thing here is so confused, that I envy your retirement, and wish you out of it. At the same time some men are humbled, who were insolent, and others are ready to take both their places and behaviour. What I like best, is, that the sessions will be short, as most people think. I will not now argue against any part of your letter of the 15th, not that I agree with one word of it; but because I believe you ought not to think of any thing but your health, till it is perfectly settled, which, with all other happiness, I wish you most heartily and sincerely," &c.

No farther steps appear to have been taken; for Shrewsbury not only cautiously abstained from any interference, but repeatedly expressed his own anxiety to resign, while Sunderland was too much disliked and suspected by the whigs, to gain their

attention to any proposal, of which he was the author. A cessation of their correspondence with Shrewsbury ensued, till the middle of March, when we again find the duke pressed with new solicitations to attend the king, and resume his mediation.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*London, March* 21-31, 1699-1700.—My lord; It is so long since I have heard from you, that I must inquire of yourself concerning you, whether you intend to be at Newmarket, Kensington, or Hampton Court. My lord Marlborough says, that at the last, since you were there, many things are changed, beyond what anybody can think at a distance; but I am still of the same opinion I was of, when I saw you, in every particular, though folly and jealousies increase daily."

"P. S. I have had so much mind to talk of some things, that I was tempted to speak of them to my lord Wharton, but I resisted, considering that I had little credit, as you know."

In this situation affairs remained, till near the termination of the stormy discussions in parliament. At that period, the peril to which the crown was exposed, by the excesses of faction, seems to have overcome the aversion of Shrewsbury to public business, and he consented to wait on the king once more. But, while he was preparing for his journey, the controversy, relative to the bill of resumption, arose between the two Houses, and the king prudently dispensed with his immediate attendance, that he might not be entangled in the contentions of the hostile parties.

The prorogation of parliament, on the 11th of *April*, had suspended the torrent, which threatened to overwhelm the throne; and the momentary pause gave the king an opportunity of reflecting on the difficulties of his situation, and his future conduct. On the one hand he saw that the whigs were too weak and divided, to resist the attacks of their opponents; and that, in a new session, the tories would realise their threats against his foreign friends and dependants, and, perhaps, rob his crown of its dearest

prerogatives. On the other, he suspected that a party, which had proved so hostile in opposition, would not, when in power, desist from their purpose of restricting his authority; and he feared that, at a crisis which required the utmost vigour in the government, they would not consent to restore that military force, which they had so much reduced, and which was still so necessary to counteract the ambitious purposes of France. In such a predicament, it is no wonder, that his conduct was indecisive and vacillating; and, though he so far yielded to necessity, as to shew a desire of gratifying the tories, he felt no less reluctance to offend the whigs. In conformity with this feeling, the best expedient which presented itself, was to sacrifice lord Somers, who, during the whole session, had been singled out, as the principal object of hostility; and he hoped, that the whigs might be reconciled to the change. He, therefore, privately and repeatedly, exhorted the chancellor to avoid the mortification of a public dismission, by a voluntary retirement; but the upright and dignified statesman firmly refused to relinquish the seals, from the conviction, that his retreat would be construed into an acknowledgement of guilt. No alternative was therefore left, and the king, on the 17th of April, sent lord Jersey, secretary of state, to demand the seals, which were delivered without hesitation.

This measure was hailed by the tories as a favourable omen; and sir Edward Seymour availed himself of an intended journey to Ireland, to wait on the king at Windsor. The unexpected appearance of this great leader of opposition at court, excited general surprise. On kissing his majesty's hand, he ventured to congratulate him on his late deliverance. The king coldly replied, he was doubtful whether it was a matter of joy, or not, and expressed his disapprobation of sir Edward's conduct, during the late session, though he admitted, that he had acted with more calmness the last day. "But," he added, "it is useless to reflect on what is passed, we must look forward, and I hope we shall be better friends in future." Sir Edward Seymour, who had little reason to be flattered with the commencement of this

colloquy, confidently replied, "I have no doubt we shall;" and took his leave.*

But although the dismission of Somers raised the hopes, and softened the asperity of the tories, it did not diminish the embarrassments of the king. Among the members belonging to the higher departments of the law, he in vain endeavoured to find a man of sufficient rank and character to fill the vacant post; and thus the change, which he had fondly hoped would assist to extricate him from his embarrassments, was likely to prove, not only a source of perplexity to himself, but a serious injury to the interests of justice, and the service of the public.

In this crisis, we again find Sunderland resuming his activity. During the progress of the bill of resumption, he had offended the king, by his endeavours to allay the opposition, which it experienced in the House of Lords, and, for a short period, ceased to appear at court; but, on the present occasion, habit, no less than inclination, induced the sovereign to recur to his advice.

The duke of Shrewsbury was again invited to attend the king, and, accordingly, repaired to Hampton Court, in the latter end of April, or beginning of May. The purpose of this summons was to press on his acceptance the government of Ireland, and the office of groom of the stole, with the hope, that he might again be induced to take a share in public affairs. He, in fact, so far listened to the proposal, that he was congratulated by his friends on the probability of his appointment.† But, whether he was fearful of resuming the helm of government, in so tempestuous a sea, or whether the anxiety of his mind produced a return of his complaint, we cannot decide. From one or both of these causes, he again suddenly departed, on the 9th of May, without seeing the king, and repaired to Woburn, the seat of the duke of Bedford, where he seems to have met some of the whig chiefs. He soon

* Mr. Vernon to the duke of Shrewsbury, April 16, 1700.

† On the 11th of May, the earl of Marlborough thus addressed him: "I am told, if your health will give you leave, you are to be lieutenant of Ireland, and groom of the stole, which I do, with all my heart, wish you, and the king and kingdom, joy of."

afterwards conveyed his decided resolution, not only to decline the proffered honours, but to relinquish the staff of chamberlain.

Sunderland, who had sanguinely calculated on his favourable interposition, was greatly disappointed by so abrupt a departure. He, therefore, employed the intervention of Mr. Vernon, to propose a plan, which he hoped would satisfy the king, and re-establish a confidence, between himself and the whigs. This was, to put the great seal into the hands of Commissioners, approved by lord Somers, who was to resume it, either immediately, or wait till the termination of the next session of parliament, that he might avoid a repetition of the same insulting attacks, as during the last. He requested his grace's interposition with Mr. Montague, lord Wharton, and other friends, who might prevail with lord Somers; and answered for the acquiescence of his royal master. He disavowed all share in the dismission of lord Somers, but, on the contrary, protested, that, had he not himself offended the king, by supporting the bill of resumption, he could have prevented so fatal a measure. He also expressed his full conviction, that the services of the whigs were essential to the support of government, and declared that his royal master was fully impressed with the same sentiments.

Shrewsbury imparted the proposal to Mr. Montague, who immediately repaired to town, to communicate it to lord Somers; but, even if no other cause of jealousy had existed, the subsequent conduct of Sunderland was likely to create doubts of his sincerity. For he had scarcely made the proposal, before, to use the words of Mr. Vernon, "he seemed half afraid of his own project," and clogged it with so many reservations and restrictions to secresy, as seemed to imply, that he had either over-rated his influence with the king, or was conscious he was not entitled to the confidence* of the whigs.

The opinion of Montague afforded little prospect of success, as we find from the following reply of the duke of Shrewsbury to the communication of the secretary:—

* Mr. Vernon to the duke of Shrewsbury, May 9, 1700.

"*Eyford, May* 12-23, 1700, *two in the afternoon.*—This morning I received your's of yesterday, and may truly assure my lord Sunderland, and yourself, that there is nothing in which I would more joyfully and zealously employ my endeavours, than to restore a confidence, between his majesty, and that sort of people, who, hitherto, have chiefly, if not singly, adhered to his interests, and particularly between the king and my lord Somers; who, setting aside my friendship or partiality to him, is, unquestionably, the most considerable in the party. But it would be presumption in me, singly to determine, whether such a matter might be effected upon the terms now proposed, or not. The thing, in itself, is difficult; if it should not succeed, there may be inconvenience in the attempt; and it may fail, by being endeavoured unseasonably. Of all this, I am an ill judge, who know less of my lord Somers' mind, than several others, it having been my fortune not to see him, but with company, these many months; and, at this distance, I have no opportunity of being informed from himself; for, to negotiate an affair of this nice nature, by letters, were certainly to spoil it.

"There are a thousand difficulties in this business, obvious to every body. But that which offers itself, at the very entrance, is, how to get any light, whether it be seasonable or not, without opening more of this secret than may be advisable, if it should not succeed; for, unless one discourses with some freedom on this subject, with those who are intimate with my lord Somers, and have had opportunities of discovering what his resolutions are, since he parted with the seals, one cannot be enough informed, what his present disposition is, to make a probable judgment what hopes there may be of prevailing with him to resume.

"Though every honest man is interested in the success of this matter, and in the punctual performance of all that shall be founded upon it; yet, the proposal arising originally from my lord Sunderland, he is principally concerned in the well-keeping the secret: wherefore, it is reasonable, he should have the direction, how far, and to whom, it should be communicated; so that, if I am to make any step in this affair, I desire to be punctually

instructed. If it be a concern, one is not likely to do much good in, I would be very careful not to do mischief."

The result of the overture, which was made through Mr. Montague, justified these forebodings, and proved the deep-rooted antipathy, which the whigs fostered against Sunderland. The communication of the proposal, and its mortifying result, are given in the ensuing correspondence.

MR. MONTAGUE TO LORD SOMERS.

[Imparts the proposal made by lord Sunderland, through the duke of Shrewsbury, for restoring the great seal to his lordship.]

"*May* 12-23, 1700.—My lord; I came to town last night, upon a very extraordinary occasion, and, finding you out of town, must give you an account of it. After I had taken my leave of the duke of Shrewsbury, which was at dinner, he sent to speak with me. He seemed much surprised with a letter he had just received from Mr. Secretary, which he shewed me. In it, Mr. Secretary tells him, that lord Sunderland has found out a method, whereby the seal may again be put into your hands; that my lord Sunderland would have acquainted him with it, if he could have seen him on Tuesday, (for he was then sick,) and desired he would stay till to-morrow, at Hampton Court, that he might inform him of it. He advised with me what he should do; he had taken leave of the king, and had no pretence to stay. This seems only like a shift of lord Sunderland, to lessen the odium, and to be an attempt you probably would not like. I did not know what to make of it; but, upon the best consideration I then had, I made no great account of the proposal, advised him to go to Woburn, and to write to Mr. Secretary, to explain the proposition, and, if he thought fit, to let me know what it was; and promised, that, if he did, and I thought it likely to succeed, I would come over there to-morrow night, and fetch him to finish it.

"This he approved, and wrote immediately to the secretary, and, before he went away, sent the inclosed to me. I know not what to make of all this, only one thing is plain, that it is not

settled who is to succeed you. I am come to town, only to tell you this, and shall return to-morrow morning. I should be glad of a line from you, if you think there is any occasion for it."

MR. MONTAGUE TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Failure of the overture made to the whigs by lord Sunderland.]

"*May* 18-29, 1700.—My lord; When we parted, I understood that affair was put off, or, at least, laid aside by them, till you and my lord S———* could meet, and talk it over. If my memory does not fail me, Mr. S———'s† last letter was to that effect. You afterwards, indeed, mentioned my writing to you, either out of curiosity, or, that you might be better prepared for such a meeting. Upon my coming to town, I did give as full and particular an account of what had passed, as I could to our friend,‡ and did so far obey your orders, as not to speak of it to any body else; and I think it should be a secret, between you and me, that he ever heard of it. When I came to the conclusion of my tale, and told him, that Mr. S———'s last instructions enjoined you not to make mention of it to my lord W———,§ or me, for my lord S——— was afraid of his own project; he replied, he was of opinion, all along, as I was telling my story, that it would have some such ending, and that those gentlemen could frame no scheme of beginning such an affair, which, upon second thoughts, they would not reject themselves; and so he broke off the discourse, without explaining himself any farther. I did not press him to renew it, for some reasons you heard at Woburn, and for others which I met in town, which are not proper to be put in writing. Thus the matter stood, when I received your last letter, by which, I understand, the attacks are renewed, which I did not expect would have been done by letters; and I protest, I cannot offer my opinion upon it, unless you were master of all the parts of their scheme, and we had an opportunity of reasoning upon every particular."

* Sunderland.

† Meaning secretary Vernon.

‡ Lord Somers.

§ Wharton.

THE EARL OF SUNDERLAND TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[The king will not press him to continue in office—Wishes to see him, to converse on the project for restoring lord Somers.]

"*London, May* 23-*June* 3, 1700.—My lord; I am extremely sorry to hear that the remedies, from which you used to find benefit, have so little effect; but, since it is so, I believe the king will press you to nothing, but what is agreeable both to your health and inclinations; and, I hope, that when you come to Hampton Court, though to take your leave of all business, we may talk of what Mr. Secretary has writ to you. It is certainly feasible, and, I dare say, it will appear so, if I have the honour to wait upon you. Seven years ago, there was as little faith as now, though many things were brought to pass, which seemed impossible."

While this negotiation was pending, the king found it necessary to adopt a resolution respecting the great seal, which, since the 6th of May, had been placed in the custody of the two chief justices and the chief baron. Accordingly, having determined to appoint a lord keeper, on the 21st of May, he delivered it to sergeant Wright, a violent tory, whose acceptance of the charge was obtained through the medium of lord Rochester. Although this promotion was ill calculated to further the proposed arrangement, or conciliate the whigs, the king did not desist from his attempts to retain the support of that body, nor did Sunderland entirely relinquish his project of accommodation. Assurances were conveyed to the whig leaders, by Sunderland, that the appointment of sir Nathan Wright would not obstruct the return of lord Somers to office, that no farther changes should be made, and that the same parliament should be continued. As little did the king spare his attempts to preserve the attachment of the whigs; for he lavished his promises and professions of confidence on lord Haversham, Mr. Smith, lord Macclesfield, and others of the party, who, in their turn, replied by assurances of support. He took still more pains to conciliate Mr. Montague, whose influence he justly appreciated. In an

audience, at Hampton Court, about the middle of May, he entered into a vindication of his conduct, in the removal of lord Somers. After alluding to the current reports, that he had ill-treated so meritorious a servant, he added, "His lordship had long complained, that he was a weight on public business, and his complaints increasing, I was not unwilling to accept his resignation. I, indeed, met him half-way in his design; but I do not see why this change should have created so much umbrage, or have been considered as the first step towards dismissing the whole party. I disavow such an intention, and declare that those, who manifest a zeal for my service, may be assured of my favour; and as you have essentially contributed to the support of my government, I shall be displeased to find you now become cool, and slacken in your efforts."*

So imperfect an apology was not likely to satisfy a man, who participated in the feelings, and felt the disgrace of his friend. Montague conveyed a cold assurance of the same vigilance and zeal, which he had ever manifested, but observed, that he hoped nothing would be expected from him, which was inconsistent with his friendship and obligation to lord Somers. The king was evidently mortified by this discouraging reply, yet he added, "that is far from my intentions; on the contrary, I hope lord Somers will join with you in promoting my service, and the public good, so that nothing may arise to destroy our mutual confidence."†

The king experienced a still more severe repulse from lord Orford. When he addressed him with similar apologies and professions, and added a declaration, that he did not intend to displace the whigs, the uncourtly seaman bluntly replied, "I did not know that your majesty had a whig in your service."

The effect of this equivocal policy is indicated in the following letter:—

MR. MONTAGUE TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

May 25-June 6, 1700.—My lord; I have received your grace's

* Mr. Vernon to the duke of Shrewsbury, May 18. † Ibid.

of the 20th, and, yesterday, shewed it to my lord Somers. My lord Wharton was in town, since I received it, but I took no notice of it to him, because I understood, the liberty you gave me, extended only to my lord Somers. I believe my lord designs to write to you himself, and shall therefore say no more, as to him, but that I will not fail of meeting you, when I hear you will be at Hampton Court, and will endeavour to settle any other parlies as you would have me. Indeed, till we do meet, 'tis impossible to understand any thing, for how to reconcile what we have been told, with what was transacting, with Mr. Attorney,* when we were at Woburn, and with my lord keeper,† since, is beyond my capacity. Something of the same game is carrying on by several hands. Our master himself has spoke to many. I wish all may have a good effect, but I do not see much probability of it yet. This I am confident of, nothing effectually can be done without you. I am mighty sorry to hear you are so ill, for I value my own interest so little, I rather wish you well in any part of the world, than have your assistance and favour in business, at the expense of your health," &c.

In such mysterious transactions we cannot expect to trace the real motives and real views of parties. But the discrepancy which we observe, in the conduct and professions of the king, compared with those of Sunderland, who had so long enjoyed his confidence, leads us to suspect, that they were both acting on a different system. William appears to have been desirous of accomplishing his favourite plan of government, by effecting an union of such members of the two parties, as were likely to coalesce, while the discarded statesman consulted rather his inclination than his power, in labouring to effect a reconciliation with his former friends, and restore them to the confidence of the sovereign. Whatever was the real design, both the king and Sunderland looked, with peculiar solicitude, to the counsels and assistance of Shrewsbury, whose influence, with both parties, would render him the bond of union, whatever system of

* Sir Thomas Trevor. † Sir Nathan Wright.

administration was established. He was, therefore, repeatedly and earnestly pressed to accept the government of Ireland, and take the lead in administration. He, indeed, used his endeavours with the whigs, to overcome their antipathy to Sunderland, and to form some efficient system; but, finding his efforts fruitless, and aware that his acceptance of office would expose him to their jealousy, he prudently declined that, and every other post, which was proposed to him, though the king graciously tendered to his choice any employment under the crown.* He even expressed the same anxiety as before, to resign the staff of chamberlain, and was with difficulty induced to hold it, till the reluctance of the king should be overcome. Sunderland, who had lingered in London, till the latter end of May,† with the expectation, that the mediation of his noble friend would have proved effectual, now considered his design as hopeless, and withdrew into the country, though he expressed an earnest wish for another meeting, and his full conviction, that the interposition of the duke would vanquish all difficulties.

Still, however, the king dreaded an entire breach with the whigs, and prevailed on Shrewsbury to resume his negotiation with their chiefs. In compliance with the royal order, the duke, in the beginning of June, repaired to Winchenden, the seat of lord Wharton, where he renewed his overtures, in the name of the king, though on what precise terms, we cannot ascertain. But, every new effort tended more and more to convince him, that their antipathy to Sunderland was unconquerable; and, on the other hand, the favours, which the king bestowed on the tories, equally satisfied him, that any endeavour to restore harmony between his majesty and the whigs, would be ineffectual. Wearied, therefore, with an ungrateful and hopeless task, and averse, to use the words of the king himself, "to be ground between the two parties, as between two mill-stones,"‡ he reiterated his entreaties for leave to

* See the extract from his diary, in the correspondence with the king, page 182.

† Mr. Vernon to the duke of Shrewsbury, May 28, 1700.

‡ Mr. Vernon to the duke of Shrewsbury, May 30, 1700.

resign, with such earnestness and perseverance, that the king could no longer withhold his assent; and on the 22nd of June, the key was delivered by the hands of Mr. Vernon.*

Disappointed in the hopes of Shrewsbury's mediation, William again recurred to Sunderland, and earnestly required his presence at court. But the veteran statesman was now himself discouraged from all farther interference; and, to avoid the blame of having recommended such measures, as his royal master was disposed to adopt, he positively declined to obey the order, though several times repeated, and finally by a letter in the king's own hand. This conduct is a strong proof of his good faith in the preceding transactions, and evinces the sincerity of his declaration that if he could not conciliate the whigs, he would, at least, suffer with them.

Thus, deprived of the counsel of two noblemen, on whom he placed his chief reliance, the king consulted his fears, rather than his inclinations, in bringing more tories into office, and shewed himself influenced in his arrangements, by the advice of lord Rochester, the head of the party. He gave the key of chamberlain to lord Jersey, intending to chuse a new secretary, on his return from his usual excursion to the continent. He conferred the office of solicitor general on Mr. Harcourt, and he destined lord Godolphin, for the head of the Treasury,† on the removal of lord Tankerville, to whom he intended to transfer the privy seal, vacant by the recent death of lord Lonsdale. While, however, he rendered the whigs desperate, by these and other changes, with all the inconsistency of divided inclinations, he offended the tories, by not only evincing a latent aversion to discard all their opponents, but by giving the latter the preponderance in the commission of lords justices, and by delaying to call a new parliament. His health, which was now declining, was still more impaired, by the agitation of his mind; and, having completed his imperfect arrangements for the government, during his absence, he hastened abroad, in the latter end of June, that he might breathe his native air, and enjoy a short repose from

* The circumstances of his resignation have already been detailed, in the correspondence with the king, Part 1, chapter 8.

† This appears from a letter of Mr. Vernon, as early as July.

the party contentions in England. Even, after the departure of the king, the hopes of gaining the whigs, were not finally abandoned; for we find a cold and formal letter from lord Somers, to the duke of Shrewsbury, adverting to the proposal made through Mr. Vernon, and declining a meeting, though he disclaimed any hostile feeling towards his enemies.

LORD SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*London, July* 9-20,1700.—My lord; I have been several times writing to your grace, upon the subject Mr. Montague mentioned to me, by your order, and which you after took notice of, in a letter to him, which you allowed him to communicate to me; but, whenever I went about it, I found I should say too much, or too little; and, therefore, I resolved to reserve my thoughts of that affair, till I had the honour to see your grace. That is a happiness I shall be overjoyed at, when a meeting may be, without the danger of drawing your grace into a suspicion of caballing, but when that time will come, I cannot foresee; for, though I neither do, nor ever will meddle with public affairs, nor have the least resentment imaginable, against any persons, who may be imagined to have been most active in getting me displaced; yet, I find it is very hard, to convince men that it is so. Time, I hope, will do it, and, as I have had patience to go through the persecution of the last session, so I will prepare myself, as well as I can, for what is yet to come. I am sensibly concerned at the continuance of your grace's ill health, which I think is a public misfortune. I hope you will yet allow me the honour of being amongst the number of those who are really and faithfully your servants. I am sure I shall never be wanting, upon all occasions in my power, to shew that it is a great truth," &c.

We have not documents to trace the details of this long and intricate negotiation, but we have evident proof, that, even after this period, Shrewsbury still persevered in his applications to the whig chiefs; and that he was present at a meeting of the party, which took place in August, at Boughton, in Northamptonshire, the

seat of lord Montague. The result of this final effort was, however, as vain as any of the preceding, for, lord Somers and lord Orford, not only refused to attend the meeting; but even Mr. Montague declined accepting any responsible post, from a fear, lest he should be exposed to the hostile attacks of the tories. He soon afterwards, indeed, withdrew from the House of Commons, and accepted a seat in the Upper House, under the title of lord Halifax.

LORD SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the proposed meeting of the whigs at Boughton.]

"*July* 18-29, 1700.—My lord; Though I ought to be very reserved in troubling your grace with letters, which can have nothing in them, yet I am pleased to lay hold on any pretence for writing. That which I now make use of, is to desire to know, if your grace intends to honour my lord Montague, with your company, at Boughton, the 10th of August. He has asked me to be there; and, I could easily resolve what to do, if I knew your purpose. I must not omit to make my acknowledgments of the most obliging favour of your last kind letter; and to assure your grace, that there is no man alive, who does more truly honour your grace, or is more entirely devoted to your service, than yours," &c.

LORD ORFORD TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Complains of the cessation of their correspondence—Professions of zeal and friendship—Declines visiting lord Montague, at Boughton.]

"*Chippenham, July* 20-31, 1700.—My lord; The last post brought me the honour of a letter from your grace, for which I return you my humble thanks. I confess, for some time, I have lain under a belief, that either you had taken something unkindly of me, or that my acquaintance was rather troublesome than otherwise. As to the first, I was not in the least conscious to myself, that I had been wanting in any part of friendship, or service to your grace, that lay in my power to perform, from the first minute I had the honour to be known to you. For the other, I

pretend to know myself so well, that I could not blame any body that thinks my acquaintance of no use or satisfaction to them. With these thoughts I afflicted myself, and resolved not to trouble any body else with them; but, since you are pleased in your letter to give me reason to believe I am still in your good opinion, I have nothing to complain of, but my ill fortune, which, I fear, will not allow me the pleasure of waiting on you, this year, at Boughton, and so I have wrote lord Montague and lord Somers. As for the numbers he says will be with him, I agree with your grace that they are rather of the most; for I cannot be of the mind with the old saying, 'the more the merrier,' the other part possibly may be true.

"If I have not the good fortune to meet your grace before the winter, it will be a very sensible affliction to me; but I will use my endeavours, that I may have the opportunity to tell you how much I am," &c.

LORD SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Expresses his reluctance to attend the whig meeting at Boughton.]

"*July* 27-*Aug.* 7, 1700.—My lord; As soon as I had the honour of your letter, I went to look for Mr. Montague, to learn what he said to my lord Montague, on my part; for he told me, he had taken upon him to make a final answer for me, upon my lord's going into the country, I being myself out of town at that time. I did not find him till yesterday, and, upon my opening to him the subject of your grace's letter, he grew extremely concerned, and told me plainly, that the matter was gone so far, with respect to me, that my lord Montague would not only be finally disobliged, but would downright quarrel with him, should I fail to be at the meeting.

"I had no more to say after such a declaration; but it is with the utmost reluctance that I think of going into a throng, as I find I am like to do, especially when there was a possibility for me to have had the happiness of seeing your grace more privately, which I had no hopes of, till your letter told me otherwise.

"I have writ to my lord Orford, desiring to know, if he does not intend to be at Boughton, and have not yet received his answer. He is but lately returned to Chippenham, out of Lincolnshire, as I understand.

"Mr. Montague is come to me, whilst I am writing this, and is very positive, that I ought not to decline the journey to Boughton, and full of hopes that your grace will not. It is very unlucky that mistakes should engage me so far in a thing, that will possibly occasion much discourse, and give no satisfaction; when all that I aimed at by it might have been obtained a much easier, and better way, at Winchendon. I am, with the greatest truth," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD ORFORD.

[Justifies himself against the imputation of coldness and reserve.]

"*Grafton, Aug.* 5-16, 1700.—My lord; I look upon the letter I writ to you, some time since, as the most fortunate thing I have done a long while, since it has removed a very hard opinion you had of me, in which your lordship will give me leave to say, you were in the wrong doubly; first, for suspecting any alteration of my kindness and friendship to you, upon such surmises as, I am sure, could have no reasonable foundation: secondly, for continuing in that belief, and never taking the least notice of it to me. Friends, who have lived as we have done, should not fall into coldness or distrust, without giving an opportunity of explaining what may have been misconstrued, or rectifying what may have been misrepresented. I solemnly protest, I cannot accuse myself of having done, or omitted, one thing that should give your lordship reason to suspect a change in me. I have, from our first acquaintance, upon all occasions, been sincerely and zealously your friend, and am so this moment; and, if you are so kind to allow the expression, I faithfully assure you, that there is not a man in England I love better than my lord Orford. If you had continued silent, how unjustly would you have censured," &c.

The death of the duke of Glocester, which happened on the

30th of July, soon after the departure of the king, aggravated the dangers which menaced the country; for, as the health of William was now declining, the princess Anne, who was withou the prospect of issue, appeared to be the only barrier to the restoration of the Stuarts. The House of Brunswick was, indeed, the next of the protestant line, in succession; and the king himself appears to have been induced to extend the settlement of the crown to that family, and was strengthened in his desires by the advice of Sunderland;* but it was evident, that the project would be firmly opposed by the tories, and even many of the principal whigs evinced a reluctance to call another foreigner to the throne. At the same time, there was the utmost reason to apprehend, that the domestic troubles of England would be aggravated by a foreign war, from the contest which would probably arise for the spanish succession, the very apprehension of which had already been sensibly felt on the funds.

The prospect of the troubles which were likely to spring from these and other sources, not only deterred Shrewsbury from mingling in public life, but prompted him to withdraw from the storms which threatened his native country, particularly as his health was again deeply affected by the anxiety and agitation of his mind.

He accordingly seized the earliest opportunity, on the return of the king, to solicit leave for his intended departure; and the permission was as readily, as it was graciously, granted.†

During the continuance of the duke in England, we find no farther correspondence between him and the whig chiefs. The cause appears to have arisen from the avowed attachment he had manifested to lord Sunderland, and the zeal he had shewn, in vindicating his sincerity. In fact, the last visit which he paid before his departure, was to Althorp; and, to the latest moment of his stay, he did not hesitate to proclaim his friendship for that

* From Mr. Vernon's letters, it appears, that lord Sunderland was one of the earliest promoters of the new act of settlement, in favour of the Hanover family.

† See the correspondence with the king, p. 185.

nobleman, and to blame the unjust suspicions which had been thrown on his character and conduct. This frankness was too contrary to the prejudices of the leading whigs, not to produce considerable dissatisfaction among them; and we find the duke of Bolton, in a letter to lord Somers, labouring to involve Shrewsbury in the same censure which had been cast on Sunderland.* The appearance of harmony, indeed, was preserved between him and his former friends; but, after his departure for the continent, we shall find that he cautiously abstained from taking any personal share in the transactions in which they were implicated, though he still professed the same zeal for their cause, and the same friendship for their persons.

* The duke of Bolton to lord Somers.—Hardwicke's Collection, vol. 2, page 437.

CHAPTER 11.

1700—1705.

Brief account of the conduct of the duke of Shrewsbury, during his residence at Rome—He refuses to accept a post in the administration, after the accession of queen Anne—Falsely supposed to have been privately reconciled to the church of Rome—Justifies himself against the imputation—His correspondence with lord Godolphin, the duke of Marlborough, and the whig chiefs, from 1702 *to* 1705.

WITH the departure of the duke of Shrewsbury for the continent, this Selection would naturally close, because its object is, to exhibit him as a minister and statesman, and to develope the cabals of party, during his administration. We cannot, however, take leave of so distinguished a character, without adding a few notices, which may serve to gratify the curiosity of the reader, as to his conduct during his stay on the continent, and on his subsequent return to England. Beyond that epoch, the family papers do not extend; and, therefore, the details of his political life, in the reigns of queen Anne, and George the First, must be sought in the pages of our national history.

The coldness which began to prevail between Shrewsbury and his whig friends, even before his departure, was evidently increased after his establishment on the continent. On the impeachment instituted against lords Somers, Orford, and Halifax, in consequence of the conclusion of the first partition treaty, he certainly manifested some sympathy in their behalf; but it was combined with a great degree of caution, and seemed rather complimentary than real. This is strikingly marked in the following letter, which he addressed to lord Somers:

* "*Rome, June* 17, 1701.—When first I received the news of

* Printed in the Hardwicke Collection, vol. 2, p. 440.

the proceedings against your lordship, and the rest of the lords, I had writ a letter to you, and to my lord Halifax, upon the subject; but, reflecting, before they were sent, what had happened some time before, upon my lord Bellamont's letters, I thought it more advisable to burn mine, than to send them; and, not daring, at this distance, to write all I wished to say, I chose rather to be silent for a time; being then in expectation it would not be long, before I should wait upon you in England. But this last relapse, with the assistance of very ill weather, and not a little spleen, has proved so obstinate, that I have not been able to get the better of it, with the help of a vast quantity of vitriol, which I have taken these last eight days, in hopes to patch me up for a journey, insomuch, that I am feverish, with several other bad symptoms, and am forced to quit this remedy. This state of my health making it very doubtful when I shall return to England, I can no longer omit assuring your lordship of my most sincere concern for what has happened. The above-mentioned caution hinders me from all I have a mind to say; only, I conclude, for good reasons, that no trial now, or at any other time, will follow upon the charge against you. Though this, I know, is a mortification to you, yet you may comfort yourself with the thought, that, in a little time, mankind will come to itself, and learn truth and justice; but, however, I cannot help referring to my old opinion, which is now supported with more weight than I ever expected; and wonder that a man can be found in England, who has bread, that will be concerned in public business.

"Had I a son, I would sooner breed him a cobbler than a courtier, and a hangman than a statesman.

"I have constant relations from Mr. Yard, of matters of fact; but, at this distance, those accounts cannot be so exact or particular, as to give a true light how affairs stand. If I could be serviceable to your lordship, lord Halifax, and even my lord Orford, by writing to any friends, or by coming myself, if you think that useful to you, there is nothing in my power I should not be ready to do, that might shew how sincerely I am concerned

for you, how much I value your friendship, and with what esteem and truth I will ever remain," &c.

He seems, however, to have taken no farther interest in this memorable transaction; and the correspondence, which was still maintained between him and his friends, at this time, is confined to matters of taste and ordinary civility, without any of those warm expressions of attachment, which are observed in his former letters. The cause may evidently be traced to the disappointment he still felt, at the failure of his repeated endeavours to vanquish their hostility to Sunderland, added to his fears of awakening the enmity of the tories, who were now predominant, and who evidently laboured to spare, both his feelings and his honour, by making a marked distinction between him and the whig chiefs.

On the accession of queen Anne, Marlborough and Godolphin, who guided the helm of state, hoped to secure his support, by the offer of the post of master of the horse, which was conveyed to him, in the most flattering manner, and with the most gracious expressions from the queen herself.

LORD GODOLPHIN TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*April 5*, 1702.—I have taken the liberty to write one letter to your grace since the king's death, but I doubt whether it has come to your hands, or whether this will do so, your friends here being full of hopes, you have been some time upon your journey towards us.

"I should be very glad, if any thing I could say would contribute to bring you here sooner. The queen's government is established, with much applause, and her revenue is given for her life, as the late king had it. Her family is not yet settled, nor will it be entirely done, till after the coronation, which is appointed the 23rd instant. She desires to keep the place of master of the horse open till you come, that it may be in your power, if you have the same inclination for that place, which you have formerly

had. I shall not enlarge upon this subject, at present, but it is not to be conceived what good you might do, in our present circumstances.

"The uncertainty I am in, whether my letter will find you, saves you from any farther trouble, at this time, from, my lord," &c.

If Shrewsbury, however, had been inclined to quit the retirement at Rome, which he had so deliberately chosen, he was still too much identified with the whigs, to break his long connection with that party, by accepting a place in an administration formed on a tory basis. But he was evidently flattered by such a testimony of public respect to his character, and, in his Diary, records the offer in terms of exultation.*

His reply to this proposal, evinced his usual aversion to public life:—

† "*July* 1, 1702.—You have long deserved the best employment in England, and now I heartily congratulate you, that you have it. At the same time, I think it is much more happy for the public than for yourself, that a person, every way so capable and acceptable, is in a place of such trust and importance. I make no question but your great ability will make it easier to you, than it would be to any man living; and I hope you will have as much content, as I understand the nation generally expresses upon this promotion. I renew my petition to you, that you represent to her majesty, my declining the honour she designed me, as not proceeding from any want of zeal for her service, but from a certain incapacity, both of body and mind, never to engage more in a court life. I have troubled you so often with my own thoughts, upon this subject, that I believe you know my mind, better than I do how to express it. I am sure it is very sincere in wishing well to England, and all glory and happiness to her majesty's reign," &c.

* See page 182, *note*.

† This letter is in the Blenheim Collection.

Although the duke of Shrewsbury thus positively declined taking a share in the new administration, he effectually employed his influence with the ministers, in procuring the place of *teller* of the exchequer for his friend, Mr. Vernon, who, at this period, was removed from the secretaryship of state. He also maintained an intimate correspondence with both Marlborough and Godolphin, and testified, on all occasions, a patriotic exultation, in the success which crowned the arms of the british general. Of this we have many proofs, in the letters which occurred during the eventful year of 1704.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.*

[Congratulates him on his success at Schellenberg.]

"*Rome, July* 26, 1704.—My lord; If it be long that you have had none of my letters, I hope you have done me the justice to conclude it was because I would not be troublesome, when I could not be serviceable; and not for want of that true respect and kindness I have long, and will ever profess to the duke of Marlborough, which now occasions in me so lively a transport of joy, that I cannot forbear congratulating with your grace, on your late success, so glorious, and so wholly owing to yourself. If the affairs of Europe are reduced to any tolerable posture, it is entirely due to the justness and secrecy of the measures you have taken this campaign, and to the vigour with which you pursue them. I will not mis-spend your time with political reflections, which you can make much better than I, but must tell you that your name is so terrible in these parts, that, in this holy, ignorant city, they have an idea of you as a Tamerlane; and, had I a picture of old colonel Birch, with his whiskers, I could put it off for your's, and change it for one done by Raphael."

* In the Blenheim Collection.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Thanks him for his congratulations—Exults in the victory at Blenheim—Loss of the enemy.]

"*Camp at Sefelingen, near Ulm, August* 30, 1704.—My lord; It was with great pleasure, that I received yesterday the honour of your grace's letter of the 26th past, and am particularly obliged to you, for your kind congratulation, upon our success at Schellenberg. Our latter victory, at Blenheim, I am confident, must have given you much more satisfaction, as it is of greater consequence to the public, and the enemy's loss more than we could have expected, or indeed have ventured to wish for. The elector of Bavaria has been obliged to abandon his country, and by several letters, intercepted, going from the enemy's camp at Rutlingen, to Paris, dated the 19th instant, they own that this battle has cost them upwards of forty thousand men, killed and prisoners; and by the desertion since, upon their hasty march, or rather flight towards the Rhine, Mons. de Tallard's army, we reckon, in a manner, entirely cut off, besides the loss sustained by the marshal Marsin, and the elector of Bavaria's troops. We leave general Thungen here, to besiege Ulm, as the chief key into these countries, and, with the rest of the army, are marching towards the Rhine, where I hope God Almighty has farther blessings in store for us, before the end of the campaign. I beg your grace will let me have the satisfaction of hearing sometimes from you, under cover to Mr. Ravenant, the queen's resident, at Frankfort, and that you will do me the justice to believe me, with the greatest truth and sincerity," &c.

"Besides what has been taken by prince Eugene, and the Germans, I have 107 colours, 34 standards, and 44 pieces of cannon, which were all taken by the troops I have the honour to command, as also the inclosed list of general officers, which are all to go for England."

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Thanks him for his correspondence—Anxious for his return to England—Military movements subsequent to the battle of Blenheim—Requests his opinion respecting a negotiation for an alliance with the Venetians.]

"*Camp at Weisembourg, Sept.* 30, 1704.—My lord; I have already owned, by mine of the 28th past, the receipt of your grace's letter of the 26th of July, as I must do that of the 30th of August, which Mr. Stepney, who has been so kind as to come and make me a visit from Vienna, delivered to me the last week. I cannot be enough thankful for the obliging terms you are pleased to use, nor can I express the gratification I have, in the hopes you seem to give of seeing you in England; it is what I have longed for, a great while, as well as many other of your friends, but, I dare say, none would enjoy more real pleasure in it, than myself.

"By my last, I told your grace we were hastening towards the Rhine. We passed that river, at Philipsbourg, sooner, by some days, than the enemy expected. However, they pretended to give us battle, on the Spireback, and had actually posted and fortified themselves on the Queik, in order to dispute our coming to Landau, but, upon our approach, they always retired with great precipitation, and left us, at last, entire masters of the siege, which the king of the Romans is carrying on, while prince Eugene, and myself, cover it. As your grace will already have been informed, the continued rains, we have had, for several days past, have been some obstruction to us, but, now that fair weather seems to be set in again, the siege will be carried on, with greater vigour, so that we hope to be masters of the place, in about three weeks. After which, if the season favors us, I shall endeavour to seize Traerback, and extend our winter-quarters to Treves, and along the Mozelle, and so end the campaign.

"I have a letter, by the last post, from Mr. secretary Harley, in which he gives me his private thoughts, that this might be a proper juncture, to set on foot a negotiation with the Venetians, for bringing them into the grand alliance, wherein I am confident, if you would give yourself the trouble, your knowledge and interest

in those parts might be of great use, and I am as sure her majesty would readily come into any measures you should propose; therefore, I beg that, by your next, you will please to give me your opinion of this matter, with what hopes there may be of success, and the most likely means of bringing it to pass.

We have been kept a long time in suspense about the success of the engagement between the two fleets in the Mediterranean, and are still without any relation that can be depended on; but by what we have from France, we have reason to believe, the advantage has been on our side."

Meanwhile, the duke of Shrewsbury continued to maintain an interchange of letters with the leading whigs, though the correspondence was, at first, chiefly confined to subjects of taste, and the arts. But, in 1704, when his former friends were endeavouring to force themselves into the cabinet, this intercourse assumed a new character. Conscious of his influence, they laboured to interest him in the political affairs of England, and spared neither persuasion or argument, to secure his support. Jealous, also, of his communications with the treasurer and general, and even with Harley, who had been recently appointed secretary of state, the more violent of the party gave countenance to various rumours, which were industriously circulated against his character. Cardinal Janson, the french agent at Rome, having sent him, by means of a hermit, some indirect and vague proposals, relative to the negotiation of a peace, he was accused of caballing with the papal court, for the purpose of promoting an accommodation with France, which was then regarded, in England, with abhorrence. To this was added a malicious inference, derived from his continuance at Rome, and the attention, with which he was treated by the pope, that he was unfaithful to the religion he had embraced, and secretly reconciled to the roman catholic church.

These rumours, however idle, made such a deep impression even on lord Somers, the most faithful and upright of his friends, that he could not refrain from addressing him on the subject, and exhorting

him, either to return to his country, or adopt some effectual method of refuting such injurious calumnies.

LORD SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

* "My lord; I did myself the honour of writing to you, from Bath, last October. I sent another letter about Christmas, in which, according to your order, I mentioned what your grace had formerly said was the price the gentleman required for his Guido, and took the liberty to renew my suit for that, or any other picture, you might meet with, and thought well of. There being now nearly half a year gone, since my last trouble of this kind, I venture to write again, for I cannot content myself totally to lose a privilege, I have formerly had of corresponding with your grace. I shall always use it very modestly, being sensible my letters are as little useful as diverting. The present humour of our country affords few pleasant subjects for a letter; and if I could write of things of consequence, I believe, by what I have seen in your former letters, you would not approve of it, considering the hazard of the miscarriage of letters.

"We were in a very general expectation of seeing you here, this spring, and you cannot imagine how uneasily the disappointment was borne by your friends, and what construction was put upon it, by those, who do not deserve that name. This is a very foolish liberty I take, and I do a violence to myself, in breaking through that natural shyness (for modesty is too good a name for it) which restrains me too often from dealing so freely as I ought, with those I love best; but, as I do it this once, so I shall not be guilty of it a second time, nor had I gone so far, but that the talk and the censures, that passed, upon this last disappointment, were so very much more general, than formerly, and (in the ferment we were in) you cannot but believe, they were worse natured. Those that honour you most, did not content themselves, without saying, you owed something to your country, and that you had been long

* Without date, but probably written in June, 1704.

wanting to it, in very critical times. I never was wanting, upon any occasion, to shew I had a true honour for your grace, and I never gave a greater proof of it, than in this freedom I have taken; and I am not sure I shall have confidence to let this letter go at last; but if it does, I persuade myself, you will not interpret it amiss, because it is impossible I should have an indirect end in it, how much soever I am mistaken, or how ill-bred soever I appear.

"Never man was wearier of a place, than I have been of this country, for many years, nor any one reckoned you happier than I have, for being out of the reach and hearing of all the malice and baseness, and violence, that men are practising upon one another; and I had not put you in mind of coming among us, but that I thought your honour began to be so much concerned. Give me leave to say, that if your health will not permit you to come, or if you think this continues to be too inhospitable a soil, I think you should not raise an expectation of your coming, because it always raises a new discourse, and every time more spiteful.

"Since I have begun to be thus foolish, in giving advice to one of the wisest men I ever knew, I will commit another folly, which I hope will, without any apology, shew itself to be very well meant. There are some, to whom you have writ of business, relating to public matters; I mean persons of consideration. To my knowledge, these things have been spoken of, in a manner you would not wish, and a turn given to your letters, that, I dare say, you did not mean. I shall say no more, for, if you do write to any such persons, you know them: if you do not, the injury is somewhat greater.

"I had written thus far, when Mr. Yard came to me, and I told him, amongst other things, that I had been writing to you; but that it was an impertinent letter, and I would not send it. He told me, I had not writ to your grace a great while, and he would not go from me, without it; and so, at last, I determined to seal it up, and put it into his hands, and to beg you to interpret, favourably, the confidence I should never have taken, if I were not with the greatest sincerity," &c.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD SOMERS.

"*Rome, July* 5, 1704."—After sending him an account of a private sale of pictures, he proceeds: "I shall now thank you for the favour of the last letter, and most infinitely, for the kindly freedom you have taken in it. Your lordship would have completed the obligation, and may do it still, if you will acquaint me what are the censures people cast upon my absence. If it be, that they say, I have changed my religion, I can assure you, I take care nobody shall believe it here, and it is hard, after what I have done, and ventured for the P. R.* that I should be suspected there. But so false a calumny, I know, will soon vanish at my return, and, therefore, will trouble me the less. If, as your lordship mentions, they think I have been any way wanting in critical times, they might remember, I was not wanting, in much more critical and dangerous trials; when, to preserve the liberty and religion of my country, I ventured my life as freely, if not more, than any body, my house being the place, where most of the considerable meetings were held, in order to call in his late majesty. If people are angry with me, that I will not serve, they might consider my want of health, and impossibility to bear the air of London; my natural aversion to, as well as incapacity for, business; but, above all, that I look upon ours, as a country that will not be served, satisfied neither with those in affairs, nor with those who decline them; and if, necessarily, I must fall under their censure, I am much more desirous to do it for the last, than the first. However, since your lordship says, that people grow every year more malicious, upon the deferring my return, I will delay it as little, as well I can.

"It is now, not five days since my spitting of blood has ceased. I am just entered into a course of waters, and the season is now so hot, that travelling would be very dangerous for me. I am not inclined to begin my journey in the autumn, because the heats do not end here, till the middle of October, so that I must make a winter journey, and come directly out of this hot climate, to pass a very cold moist winter in *England*. The time I would chuse,

*So in the original, meaning, doubtless, the Protestant Religion.

as best suited to my health, should be to arrive early in the spring, as I will certainly do the next, and so surely, that nothing but death shall hinder me; and if your lordship thinks it were necessary for me to come sooner, I desire you will so far continue your friendship, as immediately, on the receipt of this, to let me know your opinion, and I will forthwith depart, let the season, or my health, be what they will.

"I can recollect no letter, I have writ, that could give a just occasion to any malicious turn. If I knew upon what subject it is pretended, I might remember better, whether there be the least ground or no. I am sure I trouble my own head very little with thinking on politics, and I hope I have not been so foolish as to trouble others with them. The weakness of my breast, and uneasiness of my hand, put me in mind, that this tedious scrawl will be intruding too long on your lordship's patience, and, therefore, begging the continuance of your friendship, and free advice, I conclude," &c.

LORD SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[States the censures circulated against him—Approves his resolution.]

"*July* 21, 1704.—My lord; By your grace's letter of the 5th of July, new style, I find, that, though some of mine have miscarried, the last came to your hands, which I am glad of; for though I am out of countenance, when I think of it, yet it was so truly well intended, that I cannot repent it was written, and should have been vexed, if it had fallen into other hands. I am sorry, if I said any thing to give you an uneasy moment. I have always treated the first thing you mention, as the greatest calumny; and as to the second point, it will not be hard to believe, I am sufficiently convinced you have the right of the argument, on the side of your choice, after what has passed in relation to myself.

"I cannot but think it would be useless to your grace, as well as the most painful thing in the world to me, to be recapitulating the spiteful things, which have been said, in relation to your absence, so long. I will mention one thing, which put me out of patience, and was the true occasion of my writing. A report

went, that an overture for a peace with France had proceeded from you, and that you were thought a fit person, on that side, to undertake the negotiation, and that you were not averse to it. This passed from one to another, till it gained some credit with people of the very best quality.

"You may easily think what effect it must have with that party, who believe the utter destruction of England will be the inevitable consequence of such a peace, while France is master of the spanish dominions. And, I assure you, another party endeavoured to make as perverse a use of this report, as can be imagined. For my own part, I have, with all the industry I could, endeavoured to treat it as a downright lie; but I looked upon it, however, to be, in a greater degree, malicious, than any thing I had heard before, and that thought produced the letter you received, of which I am sure you will make no wrong use as to me. You can easily recollect, if ever you said any thing, which might give the least colour for the rise of such a story.

"I am the last man living, who would persuade you, to endanger your health, by an unseasonable journey; besides, I think a few months difference to be of very little consequence. I believe your reason against coming, to be here first, in winter, is unanswerable.

"I give your grace a thousand thanks for the account of the fine pictures. I am not capable of judging of what I do not see, nor, indeed, could I pretend to determine of them, if I saw them. But, if your grace thinks there be any one, or more, among them, or elsewhere, very good, and at a reasonable price, I could be extravagant enough to lay out about two or three hundred pounds, and should be very proud of having something, chosen by you. I am, with all possible sincerity," &c.

LORD SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the same subject.]

"*Oct.* 5, 1704.—My lord; I should not give your grace this trouble, were it not to tell you, that I have the two letters of the

13th and 20th of September,* with which you have honoured me. They were both brought by the same packet-boat, and I had them not till yesterday. I am glad I can now, upon occasion, with certainty, confute that groundless, malicious story,† which I was sure, before, was untrue; and did, as far as I could before, expose, as well as contradict. But give me leave to hint to you, that the story took its rise from a letter to the same purpose, which you wrote to somebody else than him you mention, or we are mistaken here. We are just upon the opening of a session of parliament, which I hope our great success abroad will make easy.

"I ought to ask many pardons for mentioning, so often, the desire I had for a picture of your chusing, and shall say no more of that matter.

"I dare not pretend to send you any intelligence, because I know you are better informed; so that I shall only wish you may get your health confirmed before you leave Italy; and may find every thing here, at your return, just as you wish. In the mean time, I shall think myself very happy to be honoured with any of your commands," &c.

Shrewsbury himself was far from treating these rumours with the indifference which they deserved, and, in particular, he was greatly affected with the charge of apostacy. In compliance, therefore, with the recommendation of Mr. Vernon, with whom he still continued in correspondence, he wrote a letter to Dr. Talbot, bishop of Oxford, repelling, with manly disdain, the imputations on his religion, and expressing the warmest attachment to the principles of the church of England. This protest produced the fullest effect, not only on those who were jealous of his reputation, but on the public at large, as will appear from the correspondence of lord Somers.

---

* These letters are missing.

† Alluding to the report that he was employed in negotiating a peace.

LORD SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Thanks him for some books which he sent to him from abroad—The letter to the bishop of Oxford has had a good effect.]

"*Dec.* 1704.—My lord; I am to acknowledge the honour of two of your grace's letters,* the one of the 8th, and the other of the 15th of November. A thousand thanks are due for the books you have been pleased to send, and I cannot help being out of countenance, whenever I reflect upon the confidence I have used, in giving you trouble, when your grace has not honoured me with any commands in this country.

"As to the affair mentioned in your later letter, I have so industriously spoken of it, upon all occasions, and exposed the malice and the falsehood of it, that I may, with truth, assure you, there does not the least suspicion remain with any body I know; and have not heard, that it is so much as mentioned anywhere, of late, since it is known your friends are so well prepared to confute it.

"I must also acquaint your grace, that a letter, sent to the bishop of Oxford, has had a very good effect; and I find, in my conversation, has given great satisfaction to several, who (without any reasonable ground) were under wrong impressions. I dare say, with assurance, your grace will be received by all your friends, upon your return, with as much respect and satisfaction, and with as entire a confidence, as your own heart can wish. I shall take the liberty to speak of the pains you have been at, in exposing the book mentioned in your letter, in all companies.

"It is foolish for me to pretend to tell you of what passes amongst us. The matter of supply has gone forward as fast as the forms will admit: but we had like to have lost all, by an attempt to tack the land tax to the bill against Occasional Conformity.† But the court exerted themselves in that matter, for

* These letters are also missing.

† This attempt was made in December, 1704.—"Memoirs of the Duke of Marlborough," vol. 1, ch. 32.

the first time, and brought such a number to join with the whigs, that the attempt was baffled by a very great majority.

"The Lords are engaged in the proceedings in Scotland, which seem to tend to an exclusion of the Hanover succession, rather than the coming into it. I hope it will end well at last, but I find that, in any reign, and with any success, there will be little cause to envy any one who has a share of the ministry in England.

"I am persuaded the session will be over early this year, which cannot but be well for the common cause.

"Having asked pardon for having said so much about it, and repeated to you, how very earnestly you are desired by all your old servants, to be amongst them; I will add no more, but that I am, with all possible sincerity and respect," &c.

LORD SOMERS TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On parliamentary proceedings—On the expected result of the pending elections.]

"*London, Feb.* 23, 1704-5.—My lord; I had the honour of your letter of the 17th of the last month, which brought the unwelcome news of a relapse of your bleeding; but I was comforted with the thoughts that it was not violent, and, therefore, it was to be hoped, would be soon over. Our parliament continues still, though, if they had desired to dispatch, it might have been over before this time. The last money bills are out of the House of Commons, and then we are not used to be any great while together. As soon as the session is over, the kingdom will be in the wonted ferment, upon the account of elections, and there is much expectation, how the weight of the court will be turned upon that occasion. They have felt, severely enough, what it is to have one party so great an overbalance for the other, (though it was their own party,) and would have felt it much more, without the assistance of the House of Lords, to stem some of their extravagancies. Being upon this subject, I will be so foolish, once more, as to mention to your grace, that it has been asked several times of late, in my hearing, if the duke of Shrewsbury's interest

would go wrong now, as it did at the last elections. I took the liberty to say, I did not know that the fact was so, but I durst answer, if it was so, that it was not by your direction. I hope you will pardon me for taking the liberty of giving this hint, which you may take notice of, or not, as you think proper.

"There is much discourse of some alterations we shall have, at the rising of the parliament; but, as I take it to be very uncertain, I will not entertain you with reports that go about.

"Mr. Yard told me, this day, your grace was still at Rome; and that your bleeding was not yet stopped. I hope, as it has not been to any great degree this time, so it will cease of itself, as the weather mends. But, I cannot but say, you ought to be sure it be stopped before you begin your journey, least the motion, and the disorders which must happen, should occasion a relapse."

Notwithstanding the jealousy which was fostered, by the whigs, of the interference of Shrewsbury in political negotiations, he still continued his confidential correspondence with the ministers, and cordially assisted them with his advice. On this subject we find a letter of acknowledgment from the duke of Marlborough.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On the proposed negotiation with the Venetians—Agrees with his grace, that such an overture would not be expedient in the actual state of affairs.]

"*London, Jan.* 12, 1704-5.—My lord; I am not much surprised to find, by your grace's letter of the 6th past, that what I did myself the honour to write to you from Germany, in answer to yours of the 24th of October, was not come to hand, there having been frequent miscarriages of letters, to and from your parts. I then told your grace I was entirely of opinion with you, that while our affairs in Italy had so ill an aspect, and the duke of Savoy reduced to so low an ebb, it would be no ways seasonable to press the Venetians to declare for the allies; but I am in good hopes that the succours that are hastening to Italy, and wherein her majesty has been so generous as to give her farther

assistance to his royal highness, may soon put new life to the war on that side, and even put him in a condition of acting offensively; especially, considering how much the enemy must have suffered this winter campaign, before Verrua. Then I hope the Venetians may be brought to open their eyes, and embrace their true interest; in the mean time, I believe it will be to little purpose to make any offers at it.

"I am extremely rejoiced to see, by your grace's letter to my lord treasurer, the hopes you give us of seeing you soon in England. I could wish it might be before I return to the army; however, when I am there, if your grace will give me the least intimation of the road you take, I will certainly spare no pains to come and embrace you, since no man living can be, with greater truth and sincerity than I am," &c.

CHAPTER 12.

1705—1718.

The duke of Shrewsbury departs from Rome—Arrives at Venice—Proceeds to Augsburgh—Marries the marchioness of Paleotti—Attempts of the ministry and the whigs to engage him in the administration—Correspondence on the subject—State of parties in England—His interview with the duke of Marlborough, at Frankfort—He declines all proposals to return to office—Lands in England—Alienates his whig friends—Correspondence and intimacy with the duke of Marlborough—Joins Harley and the tories, in procuring the disgrace of the whig administration—Supports the protestant interest at the close of Anne's reign—His subsequent conduct and death.

AFTER repeated intimations of his intended return to England, it is not improbable that the timidity of Shrewsbury would still have prevented him from revisiting a country, where he could not fail of being entangled in the contentions of party. But his letter to the bishop of Oxford having been industriously circulated in manuscript, was at length made public, through the medium of the press. Such a protest, from a proselyte, against the religion of the country, where he resided, rendered it highly imprudent to prolong his stay in the capital of the papal dominions. He, therefore, now carried into execution the design he had so repeatedly announced; and, early in the spring of 1705, took the route to Venice, with the intention of passing into Germany, as soon as the advance of the season permitted him to undertake the journey. His departure from Rome awakened the hopes, no less of his former friends, than of the existing ministry; and the feeling it produced strongly appears in their correspondence.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Anxious for an interview with his grace—Laments the failure of the expedition to the Moselle—Military operations.]

"*Maestricht, June* 30, 1705.—My lord; I was very much con-

cerned to find, by your's of the 18th of May, that I was like to be deprived of the satisfaction I promised myself, of seeing your grace in these parts, and, I assure you, my concern was much the greater, since the disappointment was caused by your illness. But, having now received advice from Davenant, that your grace intended to set out from Venice, about the 20th of this month, in your return home, I am very much rejoiced to find that your distemper had no farther consequence, and with the hopes of seeing you soon in the army, which, by the failure of our friends, in all they promised me on the Moselle, I have been obliged to march back to the Meuse. I was fifteen days together in the camp of Elft, without being joined by any troops, but what were in the english and dutch pay, though I was to have been considerably reinforced by the germans, immediately upon my taking the field; and finding already a scarcity of forage, by the unseasonable cold weather, which had destroyed all the grass and oats, with no manner of hopes of being supplied, in any reasonable time, with horses and carriages, promised for bringing up our great artillery, for the siege of Saar Louis; where, if we had been once posted, we should have been plentifully supplied with subsistence out of Loraine: all these disappointments obliged me to yield to the pressing instances of the States, and their generals, to come hither to their relief. Monsieur de Villeroy had already taken Huy, and was come before Liege, where he had begun to raise his batteries, and was threatening Limbourg and Cologne, by detachments, at the same time. But, upon our approach, he drew off his cannon, and sent it back to Namur, retiring, with his army, to Tongres, where it was resolved to have marched directly to him, to-morrow. But I have just now advice that he is marched this morning to Montenac, towards their lines, so that the first thing we shall do, will be to retake Huy. When I marched from Treves, I left there sixteen battalions of foot, and fifteen squadrons of horse, for the security of that place, in hopes I might have been able to have returned to the Moselle in five or six weeks; but I have received advice, that those troops have already abandoned the place, without being attacked. When

have the satisfaction of seeing your grace, I shall tell you a great deal more of the usage I have met with; in the mean time, I heartily wish you a good journey, and am, with the greatest truth, and sincerity," &c.

LORD HALIFAX TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Congratulations on the probability of his return—Reflections on the successful event of the struggle maintained by the whigs—Earnestly invites his grace to join the party—Offers his advice on the state of politics.]

"*July* 24, 1705.—My lord; I am overjoyed to hear your grace is on this side the Alps, but am very sorry you have met with so ill a welcome into our northern air. But I hope the first impression is the worst, and that, when the fatigue of your journey is over, and you are more used to our climate, it will agree better with your health, than the first change promises. Thus we flatter ourselves, who are impatient to see you, after a tedious absence, and I hope we shall meet as friends do, who have been separated by a storm, when the winds begin to fall, and the heavens to clear up. Chance, or your own lucky stars, drove you upon the warmer shore, and the more peaceable seas; but I am satisfied you were not without difficulties for yourself, and concern for your friends. My fortune has been to stand the shock of all the elements, in company, and alone; and I think our escape has proved, that our vessels were pretty tight, and not so full of leaks, as our enemies maliciously pretended, and our friends ridiculously believed. I will not brag much of the seamanship we have shewed, for three or four years together, but I will say, we have weathered some points that were thought impracticable; and I will add, that, if your grace can have confidence enough in us, and you will venture to risk our fate, and give your helping hand, we will stretch it as far as the changeableness of weather in these parts will permit.

"Pardon a long-winded allegory, for the good intention of the moral, which may be of some use to you, against you see lord Marlborough. Your grace is come at a time that even we are well used, and you may expect all the caresses and courtship that

you can desire; and I hope you will entertain them in such a manner, as may be for the service of the queen, the satisfaction of her ministers, and the advantage of yourself and your friends.

"I never troubled you with any business while you were in Italy. The letters went through too many hands, and the affairs of England change so fast, that the politics that were sent to you at Rome, would be of no use by the time you could come here. But now you are come so near, if you give me to understand that you think I could give you any lights, or that my notions could be of any use in your conduct, I will give them with the same frankness, the same sincerity, and inviolable friendship, that I ever professed.

"I return your grace a thousand thanks for the pictures you bought for me. I have paid the money which you drew on me. I spoke to sir Cloudesley Shovel, to order the commodore to take care of our cargo, at Leghorn. I wrote to Dr. Newton, on the same subject; but I believe your grace may give more effectual orders to get them shipped aboard the men of war, or in a vessel under their convoy.

"I believe you may very easily see lord Sunderland, in his passage, who can give your grace a very good account of the situation of our affairs. He is a mighty honest man. I am," &c.

The reply of Shrewsbury to the letter of lord Halifax, which may be regarded as an overture for a coalition of interests, evinces the same timid and cautious spirit, as his former correspondence, and the same aversion to public life. Indeed, he appears to have been doubtful, even at this period, whether he should prosecute his journey to England.

THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY TO LORD HALIFAX.

"*Aug.* 24.—My lord; I heartily rejoice to find, by your lordship's, of the 24th of July, that public affairs have so good a face, and sincerely wish they may long continue in that state, for the sake of those who are to have a share in them, as well as for the common good; because we know, that as sunshine follows clouds,

so clouds do, in England, as surely succeed sunshine. It is a climate so inconstant, that whoever will be active in it, must provide against all weathers. Had I a strength of body or mind capable to resist such hardships, I should be more tempted to try in company I so truly esteem and love; but, indeed, my lord, I am extremely unfit for such a task, and, therefore, I beg my friends will permit me to be an insignificant cypher, rather than a bad figure. I shall always wish success to lord Halifax, and to what he shall undertake, because I know he will act for his own honour, and the good of his country: two things I as sincerely wish well to, as I do to my own body or soul.

"The state of my health is such, that I am wholly unresolved what to do, or whither to go: I am only determined not to return to Italy. But, if I go forwards, shall probably grow worse in my journey, and be obliged to stop in the bogs of Holland, which would soon make an end of me. To pass the winter here, I believe it is very cold, and the solitude great, though the town* is pleasant, and the houses good. I have, sometimes, thoughts of going to Vevey, the warmest protestant spot I know in Europe, but it is far out of the way to England, where I hope at last to lay my bones. In short, I am doubtful what I shall do, and shall be governed by the strength I feel; for, in Italy, my bleeding has always stopped of itself; here vitriol, salt, the other remedies I can use, have no effect, and I am grown weak, and so tormented with a cough, that I get no sleep o'nights, but what I am beholden to opium for. By this description, you may believe it is uncertain whether I shall see the duke of Marlborough, or no. I the more easily bear the disappointment, since I hear from several hands, it is discoursed of a scheme I am to propose to him, and it is observed, how ready I am to come in in fair, and go out in stormy weather. Many, I am sure, will do me the justice to say, they have, at no time, seen me so greedy to come in, as to go out; and if people knew how little I think of schemes, or court employments, they might spare their censure for some, who will stand more in their way, than I shall do. I am," &c.

* Augsburgh.

The tone of this letter was so different from the anticipations conceived, on the hopes of his return, that it produced a deep sensation of disappointment, which is expressed in the reply of lord Halifax.

LORD HALIFAX TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

*"My lord; To shew the uncertainty of our climate, I am not half so sanguine as when I wrote last to your grace. Your letter of the 24th August, has put me so out of humour, that I have thrown away all the notions and schemes, I had framed against your arrival. I am quite out of conceit of England, since the air of the country, and the temper of the people, will not suffer one to live here, that any other country would be proud of. I confess, I always thought there was too much fine silver in your grace's temperament: had you been made of a coarser alloy, you had been better fitted for public use. Your mind is too tender, you lay too much weight on the rude, unmannerly treatment every body meets with in England, and you suffer too much from the idle, ill-natured stories you hear. I was so sensible of this, that I did what I could, to hinder some reports from reaching you, which could be raised, from no other design, but to vex and torment you. Since we cannot enjoy your grace's company, I am sorry you are not in Italy. I think you should consult your own health and pleasure, and not be driven from them, by any people's malice.

"I send you Jervois his opinion, under his own hand. I could wish my statues may take the fate of your grace's things, and I would not have them separated. Mr. Vernon tells me, your grace wants to know where the house is building at Woodstock. I am just come from thence, and will give you the best description I can of it.

"The house is placed on the hill next the town, over against the hill, where the great lodge stands. The front is within 400 feet of the brow of the hill, towards the old palace. By this situation, they are under a great difficulty how to make an approach. The precipice is 70 feet high, and if your grace can help them to a con-

* Without date, but written in the autumn of 1705.

trivance, how to mount this hill, you will do a very acceptable service. There are many projects, but none of them good. Lord Montague is for making a stone front to face the hill, and make a winding passage on each hand, by what they call *un Escalier de Giron*, which he says is at Meudon. If they had got over this difficulty, I think the situation very well, for there lie the meadows under the front and one side, the gardens run on the bottom of the meadows, and the offices lie towards the town. Wise has done his part very well, the gardens are in great forwardness, and will make a great shew next year.

"Though your grace's health will not allow you to come to the duke of Marlborough, I believe it is not wholly impossible he may come nearer you. I hope you will stay a little the longer at Augsburgh, for I know he would make a little tour to meet your grace; but you will take no notice of this, till you hear it from others. I am," &c.

While the attention of all parties was thus directed to the movements of the duke of Shrewsbury, he had quitted Venice, and, taking the route of Germany, repaired to Augsburgh. Here he was joined by Adelaide, marchioness of Paleotti, an italian widow of high rank, with whom he had long lived in habits of intimacy, at Rome. Having consulted the magistrates of the city, on his intention of espousing her, she made a formal declaration of her religious sentiments, before one of the principal senators. On the 20th of August, the ensuing day, after a solemn abjuration of the roman catholic religion, before the Lutheran minister, they were privately married in the presence of two of the patricians, and their respective retinues.* He communicated the intelligence to the duke of Marlborough, in a letter, which is not extant, but to which he received the following reply:—

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

"*Camp at Arscott, Sept.* 27, 1705.—My lord; I have received the honour of your grace's letter, and must confess, I was not a

*Journal of the duke of Shrewsbury.

little surprised at what you are pleased to tell me, though I agree entirely with you, that we ought to marry to please ourselves, and not others. I am infinitely obliged to you for the early intimation you give me, which I take as a particular mark of your friendship, and dare venture to assure you, no man living can wish your grace more satisfaction and content in it, than I do.

"By the last post, I received very pressing letters from the emperor, and his ministers, to come to Vienna, in order to settle a project for the next campaign, before I go over. You will believe I am not sufficiently at my own disposal to undertake such a journey, without the queen's leave, which I am apt to think may meet with some difficulty, since I know her majesty expects me early in England. This I have acquainted the court at Vienna with; but in case her majesty should think fit to lay her commands upon me, I shall undertake it, with the more satisfaction, in hopes of having the pleasure of seeing you, either going or coming, whereof I shall be sure to give you timely notice. We are now come very near the end of our campaign, having demolished all the enemy's lines, from the Mehaigne to this place, and shall endeavour to spin it out as long as we can, to give prince Louis the more time for his operations on the Rhine. I am ever, with the greatest truth and respect," &c.

The duke of Shrewsbury remained at Augsburgh, till the 10th of October, when he resumed his journey, and took the route to Frankfort, which he reached on the 17th. During his continuance in this city, his wife was introduced to the calvinist minister, from whom she received religious instruction; and on the following Sunday he appeared with her at the french protestant church, to give a public proof of her conversion. Some days afterwards, at the conclusion of divine service, she made a solemn recantation of the catholic faith, before Mons. Autun, the most antient minister of the reformed church, in the presence of two elders, and Mr. Davenant, the british envoy.*

* Journal of the duke of Shrewsbury.

At Frankfort he received the expected visit from the duke of Marlborough. As this interview had been long desired by the british ministers, as well as by the whigs, we must here advert to the state of political affairs in England, which at this period rendered the conduct of the duke of Shrewsbury an object of such great solicitude to all parties.

Marlborough and Godolphin, who, at the commencement of their administration, had identified themselves with the tories, soon found that they could not vanquish the prejudices of their own party, against continental connections and foreign war; and that their measures were cramped by the incessant machinations of those whom they had associated in the business of state; while, on the other hand, their chief support had been derived from the whigs, notwithstanding the invidious exclusion of that party from office. The consequence of this peculiar situation of affairs, was a bias in their minds, in favour of the whigs, and a partial alienation from the tories. Notwithstanding the obstruction they experienced from the tory partialities of the queen, they had so far modelled the ministry, as first to exclude the two great chiefs of the party, the earls of Rochester and Nottingham, from the offices of lord lieutenant of Ireland, and secretary of state, and afterwards the duke of Buckingham from that of privy seal. They had also recently removed sir Nathan Wright from the post of lord keeper, and placed the seals in the hands of Mr. Cowper, a zealous partizan of the whigs. The whig interest was likewise predominant in the new parliament, which met at this particular period; for Mr. Smith was placed in the chair of the House of Commons, in opposition to the tory candidate, Mr. Bromley, and in a great degree by the influence of the ministers. They had thus now formed a species of motley administration; and as their policy was, to preserve a balance between the two parties, they were influenced by the same feeling as king William, in wishing for the assistance of the duke of Shrewsbury, who was equally esteemed by both. At the same time the whigs were no less anxious for his return to office, because they considered him as identified with themselves; and through his interest hoped to forward their

views for gaining the superiority in the cabinet. The object of this interview was, therefore, to vanquish the repugnance, which Shrewsbury still continued to manifest to public life. The details of the conference are not preserved, but the result is thus communicated, in a brief note from the general to the treasurer, dated Frankfort, Nov. 1, 1705:—

"* * * * * * * I have had some discourse with the duke of Shrewsbury, and do not find him very adverse to his coming into the queen's business, his great objection being, that he fears his health will not permit him to live at London. I have not yet had the honour to see his duchess, but am to dine with them to-day."*

Notwithstanding the hopes, which Marlborough here expresses, he utterly failed in his attempts to vanquish the objections of his noble friend, and left Frankfort disappointed and dissatisfied.

In the mean time, the duke of Shrewsbury proceeded leisurely through Germany, and reached the Hague, nearly at the same time, that Marlborough returned from his long journey to Vienna, Berlin, and Hanover. During their stay in Holland, they appear to have visited each other, on the most intimate terms, and Shrewsbury was confidentially acquainted by Marlborough, with the important affairs then in agitation. No farther attempt, however, seems to have been made, to engage him in public business, though from his journal, we may infer, that his sentiments perfectly corresponded with those of the ministers, and the whigs, respecting the proposals then in agitation for a peace with France; and that he concurred with them in disapproving any accommodation, which might leave a french prince in possession of the spanish throne. Early in January, 1706, he embarked on board one of the vessels, belonging to the squadron, which convoyed the duke of Marlborough, and returned to his native soil, unfettered by any political engagement.

The hopes, which the whigs had fondly cherished of the renewal of their connection with the duke of Shrewsbury were thus completely disappointed; and the mortification was the more deeply

* Blenheim Papers.

felt, because they anticipated the full success of their application. They, consequently, now relapsed into that jealousy, which they had formerly entertained of his change of principle, and again accused him as a fair-weather pilot, who shrunk from his post in seasons of danger and difficulty. They received him with coldness and reserve; and he was suffered to retire into the country, without farther notice, or solicitation, from any of his former friends.

Still, however, he appears to have continued his correspondence and intercourse with the duke of Marlborough, whom he intrusted with his proxy in the House of Peers, accompanied with a declaration of the most perfect confidence. "Since," he observes, "your grace was pleased to accept of the trouble of my proxy, it is in so good hands, I think it much more sure to vote for the public good, than were I present to give it; and, if any thing could give me a tolerable opinion of my own judgment, in these matters, it would be the reflection, that in any parliament, I have had the honour to sit with you, I cannot recollect that we ever differed."*

The reply of the duke of Marlborough is written in the same amicable style:—

"*London, Dec.* 26, 1706.—My lord; The honour you have done, in sending me your proxy, deserved earlier thanks. I hope I shall make such use of it, as may be entirely to your satisfaction; but if any thing should happen, wherein I may have the least thought, that we might differ in opinion, you may be sure I shall not make use of it, without your grace's advice and direction, but rather be governed by your better judgment. The queen has granted your request, in behalf of Mr. Stoner, whose warrant of leave to come over is already signed, and passing in the forms. I go next week to St. Alban's, for three or four days, and, if the weather be favourable, hope I may soon have the satisfaction of waiting on you, and my lady duchess in Oxfordshire. In the mean time, I pray you will make my compliments to her grace. I

* Written in December, 1706.—Printed in the Memoirs of the duke of Marlborough, chap. 89.

wish you both many a happy new year. I am, with much truth, my lord," &c.

About this time, also, if we may credit the assertions of Harley, as recorded in the Diary of lord Cowper, Marlborough complained to the duke of Shrewsbury, of the tyranny which he experienced from the whig junta, and made some advances with him towards a new political arrangement, which appears to have been soon abandoned, without any visible reason.* But, whatever degree of credit may be attached to this information, it is at least certain, that Shrewsbury still continued on the most intimate terms with the british commander; and we find, in the family papers, traces of a correspondence maintained between them, during the year 1707. We here submit to the reader the letters which prove the continuance of their cordiality.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[On military affairs, particularly on the invasion of Provence and siege of Toulon.]

" *Meldert, July* 27, 1707.—My lord; I have forborne returning your grace my thanks for your's by Mr. Irons, in hopes to have had some good news to have sent you from this army; but the force of the enemy has made us so very cautious, that I despair of doing any thing considerable this campaign; and having received an express yesterday, from prince Eugene, I would not lose any time in letting you know, that they have entered Provence without any loss, and have resolved to begin with the siege of Toulon. If that succeed, France will be a great while recovering this blow. We shall know by to-morrow's letters from the Rhine, if it be true that the marshal de Villars has detached 30 squadrons and 24 battalions, that, joined with what may march from Roussillion, must make the marshal de Tessé's army stronger than the duke of Savoy's. But, as the duke of Savoy is like to have one month's time, before these detachments can join the

* Memoirs of the duke of Marlborough, ch. 89, v. 5, p. 210, 8vo.

marshal, I hope his royal highness will have taken the town, by which he may be in a good condition to venture a battle; the gain of it may hasten my waiting on you, to your new building, for I long to be at quiet in Oxfordshire. I have had it in my *, to make Mr. Irons a captain, without doing much injustice. I beg my most humble respects may be given to the duchess of Shrewsbury, and that you will believe me, what I am with much truth," &c.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Expresses regret that he had not appeared at court—On military events.]

"*Soignies, Aug.* 16, 1707.—My lord; I received last night the honour of your grace's letter, and would lose no time in returning my thanks for it. I cannot help wishing, when you were so near, you would have made your compliments at court, being sure it would have been taken kindly, and am sure none that knows you could have put any sinister construction upon it. I hope you will allow me leave to make the best use of what you write to me on that subject. We have been marching for five days together, with a design to bring the enemy to battle; we were twice in hopes of it; one of them was the anniversary of Blenheim, and, if the enemy would have stood, with the blessing of God, we might have had the like good success. But they continually retired before us, and yesterday got to the camp of Cambron. But this march has cost them above two thousand deserters, besides what they suffered by the fatigue of their march, for want of bread for three days together. Fearing your house may be ready before mine, I have consented that the east part may be made habitable, so that I may have the honour and happiness of being near you. I am very much obliged to my lady duchess for her remembrance, and pray you will assure her grace of my most humble service. I am, with truth and respect," &c.

* Probably power.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO THE DUKE OF SHREWSBURY.

[Will attend to his recommendation in favour of Mr. Walsh.]

"*Dusseldorp, Oct.* 18, 1707.—My lord; I did not receive the honour of your grace's letter of the 22nd past, till the evening before I left the army, so that I could not well acknowledge it sooner. I am glad to see you so much concerned for Mr. Walsh; for, besides the desire I shall always have to oblige those who deserve your friendship, I have a particular inclination to serve him, and, therefore, shall be very plain with you, on his account. As to the vacancy of the commission of trade, the same post brought me notice that it was disposed of to Mr. Moor; and the post at Brussels and the Hague is so expensive, that, as a friend, I would not advise him to it, though I shall be no ways engaged to any person till my return, by which time, I am apt to think, both Hanover and Turin may be open; and I believe your grace will be of my opinion, to advise him rather to one of those, wherein he may be sure I shall readily do my part, and will discourse him about it as soon as I come to London.

"I left the camp the 15th, and am hastening to Mayence, to meet the elector of Hanover, and if Wratislaw be not ill of the gout, I believe I shall find him there too. I intend to stay but two or three days, and shall return post, either to the army or the Hague, according to the news I meet with here, as I come back, and shall embark for England as soon as possible; and if I have not the happiness of meeting you at London, it will hasten my coming into Oxfordshire; being, with truth and respect," &c.

The aversion of Shrewsbury to office seems at length to have yielded to the persuasions of the two ministers; for, in 1708, he appears to have expressed a willingness to accept the government of Ireland. But his inclinations were now strenuously opposed by his former friends, who were become powerful in the cabinet, and whose alienation had been increased, instead of diminished. He seems to have deeply felt his disappointment on this object,

as well as in some other favours which he expected from the crown; and from this period we may date the commencement of his coldness with Marlborough and Godolphin, whom he considered as identified with the whigs.

Having no farther documents in the family papers, to develope his conduct, we shall not repeat what we have already stated in the Memoirs of the duke of Marlborough; but merely observe, that he eventually united with Harley, was appointed lord chamberlain, without the participation or knowledge of the ministry, and became the chief instrument, not only in procuring the dismission of the whigs, and the disgrace of Godolphin and Marlborough, but in effecting that change of policy, which so fatally marked the four last years of queen Anne. He, however, in a considerable degree, redeemed his character and consistency, by supporting the protestant interest in Ireland, whither he was sent as governor, as well as during his embassy in France, and by frustrating the schemes of the Jacobite part of the ministry.

At the crisis of the queen's last illness he was recommended to fill the post of lord treasurer, by the party who were favourable to the protestant succession; and, for the happiness of England, their recommendation was effectual. The staff was placed in his hands by the queen, on her death-bed;* and to his co-operation and influence may, in a great degree, be ascribed the measures which facilitated the accession of the Hanover line, and baffled the machinations for restoring the pretender.

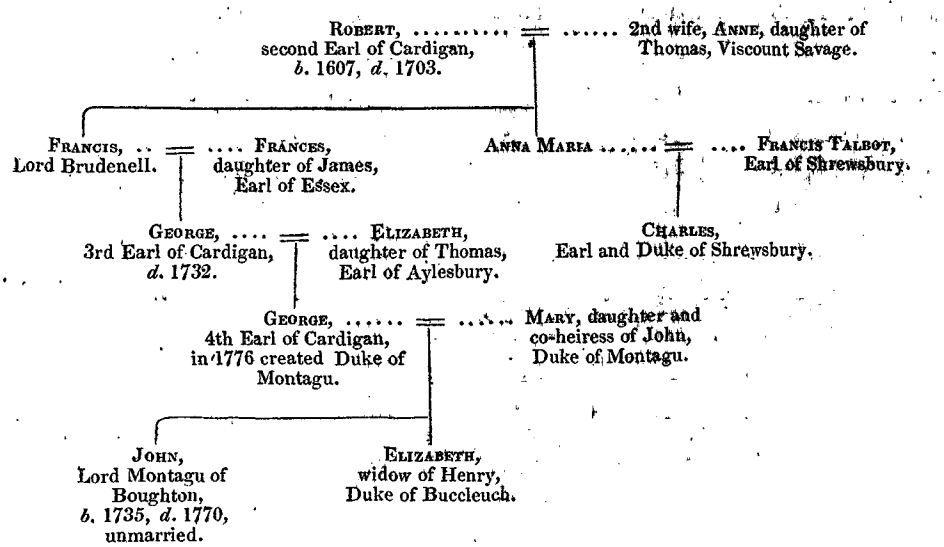
On the accession of George the First, he was continued in the place of lord chamberlain, and his duchess was appointed lady of the bedchamber to Caroline, princess of Wales. He remained in this post till 1715, when he resigned, either from disgust or indisposition. He died on the first of February, 1717-18, in the fifty-eighth year of his age; and protested, in his last moments,

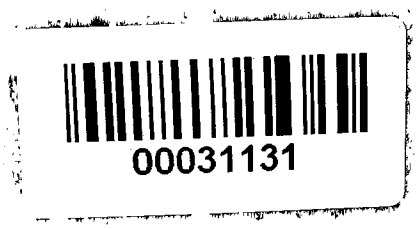
* Collins, and some other authors, say that, at the queen's death, he united, in his own person, the three great offices of lord chamberlain, lord treasurer, and lord lieutenant of Ireland; whereas it appears that he was appointed lord lieutenant, Oct. 27, 1713, and that the government was again put into commission on the 14th of April, 1714.

his sincere attachment to the doctrines of the Church of England. Leaving no issue, his dukedom became extinct, and his title of earl, with a portion of his estates, devolved on his relative, Gilbert Talbot, who was descended from John, tenth earl of Shrewsbury. The rest of his landed and personal property, with his family papers, came into the possession of his nephew, George, third earl of Cardigan, father of the late duke of Montagu, and grandfather of Elizabeth, duchess of Buccleuch;* to whose liberality I owe the materials of this historical monument, which I have endeavoured to raise to his memory.

---

* The relationship of Her Grace the Duchess of Buccleuch to the Duke of Shrewsbury, is shewn in the subjoined Table:


Robert, ... = ... 2nd wife, Anne, daughter of
second Earl of Cardigan, Thomas, Viscount Savage.
b. 1607, d. 1703.
Francis, .. = ... Frances, Anna Maria ..... = ... Francis Talbot,
Lord Brudenell. daughter of James, Earl of Shrewsbury.
Earl of Essex.
George, ... = ... Elizabeth, Charles,
3rd Earl of Cardigan, daughter of Thomas, Earl and Duke of Shrewsbury.
d. 1732. Earl of Aylesbury.
George, ... = ... Mary, daughter and
4th Earl of Cardigan, co-heiress of John,
in 1776 created Duke of Duke of Montagu.
Montagu.
John, Elizabeth,
Lord Montagu of widow of Henry,
Boughton, Duke of Buccleuch.
b. 1735, d. 1770,
unmarried.



Printed by T. C. Hansard, Peterborough-court, Fleet-street, London.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 18 July, 2018